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FROM COAL-PIT
TO JOYFUL NEWS MISSION

by

OWD Mo



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FROM COAL-PIT TO JOYFUL
NEWS MISSION.

THE SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST.

"Owd Mo;" THE DEVIL'S SERVANT.



FROM COAL-PIT
TO
JOYFUL NEWS MISSION.

FRAGMENTS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY
“OWD MO.”

WITH INTRODUCTION BY MRS. CHAMPNESS.

THIRD EDITION.

ROCHDALE : JOYFUL NEWS BOOK DEPOT.

STOCKPORT :
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TO
MY DEAR FRIEND
MRS. CHAMPNESS,
REMEMBERING HER KINDNESS,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

INTRODUCTION.

MY friend Moses wishes me to introduce him to the readers of this book. Assured that he is well able to speak for himself, I do not find this a difficult task. Yet, as the story here told does not include the earlier portion of his eventful career, it may be well that some words respecting it should be said. Moses Welsby was born and brought up in a public-house, his early surroundings and habits were rough and wicked, and he literally ran an evil course. He was a noted dog-runner and pigeon-flyer, the racecourse knew him well, and in gambling and drink he spent most of his hardly-earned wages as a coal-miner. Till his thirty-sixth year he lived without God, in a land of Bibles and Christian influences. Some few years after his conversion, he was led in the providence of God to join our Joyful News Mission, and to devote his life to telling forth the news of a Saviour's love. How, and where, he shall tell you himself.

I have only to add that, as editor, my pleasant duty has been to prepare my friend's manuscript for the press; and I have tried, while amending

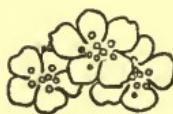
certain matters of orthography and construction, to *keep the "Mo." in it.* I trust I have succeeded, and that those who read his story will hear, as I do, in the earnest though homely language the true and tender tones of the good man whose life, in its humble devotion to God and love for perishing humanity, is such as to make the angels sing for joy.

Two photographs illustrate this little book, and sufficiently mark the contrast between the servant of sin and the ransomed and renewed soul engaged in work for God.

"Behold, I make all things new." "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature."

Such is "Owd Mo."

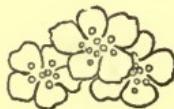
ELIZA M. CHAMPNESS.



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FROM COAL-PIT TO JOYFUL NEWS MISSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW CONVERT.

IN the year 1881 I was brought from darkness to light—from the chains that bound me to the feet of Jesus. From the first day I found Christ, I am thankful to say, I have

never been ashamed

to tell of His great love, though often in weakness.

I well remember the first Saturday after I got converted on the Monday before. A Lancashire wrestling match was coming off that I should have been taking part in; and as I came from the colliery that day, I had to go, on my way home, into a field and plead with God that I might be kept from going with my ungodly mates to this gambling-hell.

But the great struggle with Satan was when I got hold of my pay. "Now," says he, "there will be no harm to go and look on. Tha's no call to bet ony money" (you know, he could talk "Lanky"). But I went upstairs into my room, and as I saw the thousands streaming by the window my feet was well-nigh slipped; but, praise

God ! the Lord and “Owd Mo.” was a match for Satan ! Glory to His name !

After the wrestling, my mates saw me just going to the first Band meeting. Some of them, coming up to me, shouted, “Now, ‘Mo.,’ hast ta backt t’winner?” “Aye!” I said, “just a trifle.” “How much?” “Oh! not much ; a good conscience ; and a’ backt Jesus last Monday, and I’ve never lost sin’! Tha can have a bit on too, and go with me to this meeting, and we’ll pray for thee and tell God tha wants converting from Bull’s Yead to Methodist Chapel.” Of course all you dear friends will know that I have learnt a bit of grammar since then, and instead of “yead” then I should say “head” now. I was once in Didsbury College a few hours ; but if you want to

learn something new

every day, you must sit at the feet of Jesus. If the schoolmaster has failed, Christ will give you light.

The Band meeting was now singing hymns and telling what God had done for them, and praying that “Owd Mo.” might be kept from sin, drink, and his owd mates. First one prayed, then another got up and said how thankful they was to be there. Of course I knew none was more thankful than me, and I tried to get up, but could not for awhile, and then what I wanted to say was gone. My heart was too full, and we all *praised God in tears*, and I went home thanking God for one week’s grace that had kept me from the public-house.

Sunday morning came ; the dogs was looking at their master as good as to say, “Is it a race or

kennel?" and I shall not forget, as I went out to the Sunday School, how the neighbours was looking on, and saying one to another, "'Owd Mo.'s off to Methodist schoo'." "Aye, he's going for what he can catch!" Well, praise God!

I catcht it,

and by the grace of God has kept it! So the dogs had to kennel, and Christ got the victory.

Now for the first open-air service at five o'clock. Satan says, "Thou will be laughed at." "All right, devil, send them a letter; I shall be there. Tha can well afford, tha pays nowt for the stamps: and if tha will rob God, tha'rt not particular about robbing Postmaster-General." And I went. It was cold and wet, but it made me sweat; and, praise God! although I got laughed at, I got one of my old mates that Sunday to leave his companions and go down to chapel. He gave his heart to God; and Satan paying bad wages, he has never wanted to go back to his old master.

You know, the devil is *an old sweater*. You work for him long hours, and he pays you with sore bones, a starving family, a ruined character, a blighted life, an empty cupboard, and hell! after doing all you can for him. Man, turn to God, and live. "Why will ye die?" "Once I was blind, but now I see." You can't find better theology than that. Come to the same Jesus! Never mind how dark you are, Christ can give you light! and where there is light there is liberty.

CHAPTER II.

HIS FIRST ATTEMPTS TO PREACH.

WELL, I shall always thank God for open-air preaching, and for men, as I used to say, that had gone mad. If there had been no mad Methodists at Farnworth like Crompton, and a young local preacher whose name was Young, and Hargreaves, I am sure of this—there would have been no “Owd Mo.” to have written this.

Now for the class meeting. I went to one
nearly every night

the first week, to see, of course, what they was like. Some was very tame and cold ; one or two looked that from the first all steam was turned on, and class, I was sure, would help me. So I settled for Thursday night, and Sunday afternoon as well, when over one hundred of us used to meet under the leadership of that good man Thomas Crompton. We had to meet in the Wesleyan Chapel ; the vestry was not large enough for us. Oh ! what times we had then at Farnworth.

No long prayers and long talks,

near one hundred speaking in an hour and a half (ah ! the devil got it hot), nearly all converted colliers and their wives. Of course we was smiled at when praying or giving our experience ; our words, you know, came out all at once, and the members had to sort them out for themselves.

I must not forget the help we had from our Superintendent, the Rev. Thomas Wilkes ; who every Friday night used to come and meet thirty or forty of us colliers, and give us Bible lessons—so kind and nice. The patience he had with us was wonderful ! So the first Friday night I went home, down on my knees before God. “Now, Lord,” said I, “I don’t want to shame yon schoo’-mester ; help me to learn !”

And then, some of you readers don’t know what it means giving drink up, and smoking—cutting it off at one stroke. Well, praise God ! I do ; because I did it, and I started a-being very poorly. The devil said, “Yes, another fortnight, and then he will be in his grave !”

So I said, “If it is so, I’ll praise God with a sweet breath when I get to heaven ; it sha’n’t stink of neither beer nor bacca.”

Then, you know, we had some grand ministers ; they came to our homes and talked to us. The Revs. Benjamin Dodd and Arthur Westcombe—you know, these two dear men was always laughing !

If the devil had been at you when down the pit, and near on throwing you down, he seemed to have lost his grip on you when these godly men come to your house and give you a visit, and had a chat with you, and got hold of your hand, whether it had

coal - dust on or clean.

These men never lacked a congregation ; they would preach in a cottage or open-air. If we preachers of to-day have had these gifts and lost

them and our appetites for prayer-meetings—if we have more relish for lawn-tennis than we have for prayer or visiting the people, the sick, and the fatherless—sooner we are back at our trade the better it will be both for God and the people.

Some of you will be saying : “Now, it is all right about band meetings, and class, and prayer-meetings ; but tell us how you got to be a preacher.”

Well, the third Sunday, at the back of my own door and the public-house where I used to spend my money, I got

a chair with a good sound wood bottom,

and I made it into a pulpit ; and, with Bible in my hand, and tears in my eyes, and with heart burning for my mates’ conversion, as well as I could I preached Jesus ; and in a few weeks seventy or more of us used to meet every Sunday morning at 9-15, and I don’t remember ever being once late.

But, first time I went out to preach ! I remember one Saturday evening, when gotten nice and snug in bed, a rap at our door made me jump out and inquire what they wanted. “Oh!” shouted a young man, “you have to go and preach for my father, as he can’t go ; his throat is very sore.” I said, “Tha’s come to t’ wrong house; have never bin i’th’ pulpit, mon.” “It’s ‘Mo.,’ is it not?” “Yes.” “Well, you must go at half-past ten to-morrow morning.” So Mr. Greenhalgh being a good friend, I got up and prayed about it ; got Bible, opened out

four big sheets

of paper, and got references put down from one end of the old Book to the other. After being up all night making the sermon, I set off a four-mile journey to the little village chapel. In the fields, with Bible in one hand, and looking at my notes going along, I was going in for having a good time ; but seeing some men on my way, drinking, in a field, I had some words with them, and when I reached the chapel I got rather a warm—or some of you would call it a cold—reception. Mr. Greenhalgh being a favourite at the old place, it made it hard for a new beginner. The chapel-keeper give me a good talking to ; then another said “he would go home ;” and *it made me wish they would all go home*, as I could return too, for my notes had got in a muddle as well as myself ; and when I had done (and it was not long before I had) three out of the four sheets was under my feet, and the one on the pulpit was some of the first, so the other three never was used ; and I said then, if God would forgive me,

no more notes

or reading sermons for “Owd Mo.”

Soon after that event I went to one of our larger chapels, to preach for the same friend. Oh, what a change ! When I got to the chapel vestry, I met a dear old Christian chapel steward. After inquiring how it was I had come, having told him, “Well,” said he, “if the Master is with thee, it will be right ; we will pray for thee !” Now, you chapel stewards, kind words are cheap, and they stimulate a brother on his trial trip.

CHAPTER III.

WAR WITH THE DRINK.

You will remember me telling you about my first preaching tour. It was a great trial ; but God was with me. From the first day of my conversion God has never failed in one promise, “Open thy mouth, and I will fill it.” The words God has given me has not pleased every one. In one of our villages where was some four outdoor licensed shops, we started open-air and cottage-meetings ; and a great many of us that had been badly bitten by drink started temperance meetings, for we was sure the hand of God was in it all. These meetings had not been on long before Satan was roused. Two of the gentlemen belonging to these shops tried hard at the next sessions for two public-houses with licences to sell inside. However, us water-drinkers had seen a great many conversions as the outcome of our cottage-meetings ; so, nothing daunted, when the court opened we was there, to fight against the new licence. We knew the battle was the Lord’s ; and, praise God ! we did not fight in vain. I got the Rev. Thomas Champness to come and preach for us in a large tent ; on the same ground another Sunday my old friend Rev. Josiah Mee. It is a few years since then. They have tried for the licence several times ; but the devil

has been thoroughly beaten, and instead of the "Blue Boar" and "Pig and Whistle," we have a Methodist school-chapel, and a bit below there is a Church Mission, and, thank God !

no public-house.

Not far away there is a big house with a great many people in that would have been healthy and strong to-day but for the cursed drink, and that is the parish poorhouse. If I liked to give names I could nearly fill a chapter about men that have spent large fortunes in drink, and I am sorry to say some of them have filled paupers' graves.

I must not forget to tell you about the small Mission-room that was opened on the spot where God touched my heart. A very dear friend of mine, Mr. S. M. Okell, worked hard at this place, so that we opened it; but it was soon too small. A larger took its place; and, thank God! every time that I take service here both old and young come and crowd the place out. At this Mission God has wrought some wonderful miracles—men that have gone right home, killed their pigeons, drowned their dogs, and now their blasphemy is turned to praise. If any of you people read this that are singing the drunkard's song, get down on your knees, and the God that snatched "Owd Mo." from the jaws of hell will save you.

My friends, Satan has a nice way of trying to get back to a shop after he has been expelled by the holy Christ. Why, he came to me as an angel of light, and told me that there would be no harm in

training a man for a race, or keeping a few pigeons for just a hobby—a few nice ones to look at; or “if tha intends going to Band meeting on Saturday night, you can have a couple of hours at theatre on Friday night.” I told him something that he knew well enough—that “old things had passed away, and all things become new.” So he had to be told straight out that I had no desire for the so-called pleasures that had ruined me and was doing the same for thousands. Lord, we want to be a type of Thee, that any one may take a copy from us !

After conversion I was much called for a few miles round my home for open-air and temperance meetings, and God wonderfully answered my prayers. I spent all night many times with my Bible, as I knew none of it before, always carried a small Testament in my pit-coat pocket, and, praise God ! the seed sown then down that coal-pit is growing to-day.

“Owd Mo.” getting promoted in the mine.

When the manager knew that I had signed the pledge, “Now,” says he, “I have a place that is wanted on, and seeing the change that’s come about thou must have first chance.” He said again, “‘Mo.,’ is it true that you have eaten your birds and drowned the dogs?” “All true, sir, praise God.” “Then there is no more gambling?” “No ; I want now to beg a favour of you.” “What is that?” “Well, at Bolton there is a minister, and he goes to different places to preach the blessed Gospel ; and God has done so much for

me that he asked me to go with him from Saturday to Monday: can I have my place when I come back?" "Aye," said he, "if tha art going to preach, come and go as tha likes!"

Always go to God before you go to sinners. This man sent for me to pray with him before he died. Friends, don't put praying off until it is too late. I believe in prayer because God has answered so many of my own since I began to pray. "If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it."

The first year or two of my conversion my faith was much tested—often in the fire; sometimes all seemed dark: a great deal of old debts to pay off, break-downs at the colliery, affliction and death of a dear little lad. But, praise God! with a heart nearly broken, I cried to the Lord, "I will trust Thee!" "Light is sown for the righteous."

I well remember one day parting with my last penny to a poor woman, and before dinner-time that day a drayman put a load of flour down in the house. I have never known the sender of it, only God had put it in the heart of some good Samaritan. Yes, God's angels are still going about; and there has been many a baking-day since the angel made Elijah that cake. Often in the fire, but never burned! often in perils and dangers, but "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them!"



CHAPTER IV.

HOW HE JOINED THE JOYFUL NEWS MISSION.

YES, my friends, I know you want to be reading how I came across my dearest friend, the Rev. Thomas Champness. A bit more patience, and you will get to know. Some few of us colliers, with our leader, went all over the towns or villages, either open-air preaching or in chapel or mission-room. Everywhere we took God with us ; and where we went the Lord blessed us, and souls got soundly converted to God. I shall never forget the first Good Friday I spent in God's service ; it was helping Mr. Samuel Chadwick, now the Rev. Samuel Chadwick. He was then lay evangelist at Stacksteads. Oh, what a time we had, with those quarrymen kneeling at the communion-rail with their hob-nailed boots and white smocks on !

"Well, come now, what about Joyful News?" "Oh, it will take me all through eternity to tell you!" "Yes, but how did you come to join the Mission?" Well, the first number of "Joyful News," some of them, came to my home at Farnworth. We got them every week, and sold them very soon. After that Mr. Champness came to conduct special services. I had never seen him before ; but night after night I was

with him in the open-air meetings in my own town, and I got then blessings and lessons I have never lost. For months he was within a few miles, and,

wet or dry, I was by his side,

after doing a hard day's work at the colliery. And, praise God ! many a time it has been after twelve o'clock when I have landed home ; but being sober, I got up at four o'clock again with the old Book, then off to the pit. And oh! how the word of God helps a man to fight against the flesh and the devil ! The love Mr. Champness and I had for each other at that time has never been severed, and I feel if I don't go to heaven before him I should want to go right after him. "Oh, 'Mo.' that sounds like flattery !" It ain't ! I mean what I say.

There is another dear friend that has been like a brother, the Rev. Josiah Mee. We have walked out many a good time on a Sunday amongst the coming snow, eighteen miles in and out, preaching Jesus in the open air as well as in chapel, and, best of all, souls saved. You will have heard about the holy saint at Edgworth, James Barlow. Well, you know, he was in for all good work. He belonged to the "Forward Movement Team;" and I believe he said to Mr. Champness one day (this was when I worked down the pit), "Could you get Moses to come and conduct a fortnight's mission at Edgworth?" So it was arranged ; I worked at my trade in the day, like St. Paul, and went to Edgworth at night, travelling by rail and foot

twenty miles, and preached in the open air and chapel ; and some of those converts are standing to-day, praise God ! and are good men, working for the God who saved them. Now, then, about our glorious Mission.

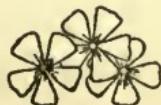
Well, I don't know what our dear mother and friend of the Joyful News Mission—I mean Mrs. Champness, one of the hardest-working women in Methodism—could see in “Owd Mo.,” because at that time *I* could not see much. I knew no grammar, and very little theology. But one day I believe the master and her had a committee meeting, and she told him she had been thinking, and she was afraid if Moses got lamed or killed down the pit someone would be to blame. So I was sent for, and the offer was made. But I had a good place down the pit, so I said I would pray about it, and consult my friends, some of my very best, and they said, “Stop at home ; there is a great work for you here.” But the more I prayed, the more God said, “Go !” and I left all, and *that was not much*, and followed Him.

I wonder sometimes whether Peter or “Owd Mo.” left most. I left a few picks and spades and shot tools, and Peter left a fishing-boat and a bit of old netting. I saw Mr. Champness, so I said, “Here am I ; send me.” But when he told me what he wanted me to do—to go round with a bag and sell books, and take a hammer and nails and put a text-card in every house if I could, and go first to the police-station for a licence, I was glad when he said, after, “I can only take thee on for

six months." Then, if all did not go on right, I could go back and get coal ; and I wished many times that day that

that six months were up now !

"But," says he, "always be Moses ; there is a great future before thee. He evidently thought so ; but I did not think much about it at the time. But I did then what I have always done—took it to the Lord in prayer. So I said, "Now, devil, if anyone else can do, I shall not fail." So off I set to the Blackburn Circuit. Of course some of my mates, when they saw the bag on my back, it was their turn to laugh. But, you know, I did a smile as well, when my bag got lighter and pockets heavier, and souls were saved through the word preached. This was in March, 1886. When I had done some months about my own home, and got a bit more "refined," then I was sent, in November, to the old city of York to a mission. I took my bag of books, knowing that, after I left, they would preach. We had a good time in the city ; God blessed us, and souls were saved.



CHAPTER V.

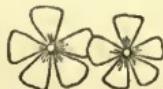
HOW HE WENT TO COLLEGE.

ONE of my first missions was at Great Harwood. I went for a week, but stayed two weeks, as God blessed the work. Came with my old friend S. M. Okell to C—— for another week, but stayed two. Sent from here by Mr. Champness to Stockport Circuit, had a very good time, getting a letter from my master to say the Rev. P. Thompson had sent for me to go to East London. “But,” said he, “I am sorry that I cannot send you

until you can talk English.”

Of course, being so near Didsbury College, I got inside, intending to look round, which I did. Then one of the young men asked me to stay to tea with them. After tea, Mr. Jackson, the governor, asked me if I would say a few words to the students. So of course I did ; it would have been a shame to refuse after they had all been so kind. So when I got home I told my master, the Editor of the “Joyful News,” that he might send me to London any time, as I had a few days before given an address at Didsbury College. So, without passing any more examinations, I was sent to London, and the sights I saw nearly broke my heart. The poor children, the poor, bruised, drunken women—black flesh, pinched faces ; they are on my memory and before my eyes.

Now, God forbid that any of us shall keep back part of the price any longer. Brother, sister, give God the best part of your life. Thousands are dying every day without God. After being in London a month, I had orders to come to Rochdale, as all the Joyful News Evangelists was coming for a Conference ; there was about four of us left London together. The rule in Joyful News Mission was that every man had to wear a black tie ; but two of these brethren had got to wearing white ties —whether it was fashion or not in London, I don't know. But coming to Rochdale the black tie took the place of the white one. You could tell who was guilty when Mr. Champness talked about apeing the ministers. Of course I was guilty of not filling some grammar papers up, and other papers—two of us got the big "D" for that ; the other man was sent to the "day school" for some months, and I was asked to go to the caravan. Of course it was a new experience to me. But when the Lord saved me, my cry was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and I said from my heart, "Anywhere or anything for Jesus."



CHAPTER VI.

MOSES AND “PILGRIM.”

ON August 5th, 1887, I made my first visit to the Joyful News “Ark,”* meeting David Pilgrim and John Longden in the town of Banbury. David soon let me know he was “boss;” so of course he told me what I had to do.

First place, look after Drummer, give him plenty of food, and keep him clean. Poor old Drummer—very willing, but slow! However, I did my best for him; but he shamed his keeper.

We had good times at Banbury. Open-air meetings on the Cow Fair and selling a few books. We came across a Freethinker on the fair. If he had thought more and talked less, he would have made a less fool of himself; I think he found that out, and went home.

Sunday night I gave my life-story in the Grimsbury chapel. I shall never forget the open-air meeting we had in the village of Cropredy. To see the old thick Wesley Hymn-book and the old people in

*The Joyful News “Ark,” as Moses calls it, was a second-hand gipsy caravan, which we had bought the previous year for twenty pounds. Our good brother David Pilgrim, assisted by others, had done a year’s good work in Kent and Essex and Berkshire, and now “Owd Mo.” was to take up the honourable toil. How he prospered and made the work to prosper under God’s blessing, the following chapters will tell.—ED.

their smock-frocks; I believe some of the angels would have been glad to have been at that meeting.

We went from there on to Quinton; held a meeting on the green, not much bookselling—David was “boss,” and he was a better singer than bookseller. The day after we came on to Long Marston; we held our meeting in the orchard, when the beautiful fruit was hanging over us, and a good time we had; best of all, God was with us.

August 11 we came to Evesham, and there we got a rough reception. If hell had been opened and all the legions let out, it could not have been worse; for nearly two hours hooting and hissing was the order. I could stand all that till they came to put their hands on Drummer; but of course I

stood up for the horse.

David and I went on the day after to Pershore, “No man’s land,” where we got the loan of a lorry (the late Rev. J. Broadbent and myself). The people still rough; but, praise God! five of them went down with us to the chapel to pray. We spent three days in “No man’s land.” I held a few meetings in the halls and lodging-houses.

August 15 came on to Himbleton; had another village meeting among the people with the “smocks.” Praise God, I loved the dear people. From there to Stourport, had service in the chapel; and on to Forest, where I gave the story of my life. At Kidderminster we spent three days. Here we had some good times, not much bookselling. I

have often said that some of these places we visited wanted more Holy Ghost power.

As we came along, and getting near the town of Tipton, some lads shouted out, “‘Owd Mo.’ with a boxing-show, has come !” But there was soon another cry when they saw the Mission-room packed to the door to hear the Gospel of the blessed God, and men and women giving their hearts to God, and signing the pledge.

Now I had to lose my friend David, as he had to leave the “Ark” for South Africa. I never enjoyed a better, and a pleasanter, and a happier month than we spent together; but we lacked bookselling, and I said, “David, when thou leaves I shall start afresh; I shall stand markets, and go round from door to door, and I shall take double the money we have yet taken ; what we have taken in the month I have been with thee, I shall take in a week!” So Bilston Market was my first attempt, and we did well. Of course the “quacks” overdid me in selling; I think they could see they had a new man on the job. I think I hit one rather hard when he was talking about his pills, saying they would cure all diseases if they had not gone too far. He wanted sixpence a box for pills; so I told them if they would take a New Testament they could have it for a penny, and if they would rule their lives by it, if it did not cure all diseases, as how far they had got, I would make them a present of the book. Well, we took a few pounds, closed our van at eleven, went to a good home that was found us, got up Sunday morning looking for a good day, which

we had with the people at Stowheath. We had some good services in Bilston at Stonefield Mission, where there is plenty of room for Mission work. We stood nearly in every corner of the town with the Joyful News "Ark," preaching Christ and selling books.

My next market was Walsall. I had not been there long before the devil sent one that he had made both a slave and a fool of. Poor fellow ! I pitied him, but he soon

got me a crowd.

Because he would not be quiet below, I said, "Now get up here." He was not going to obey, but I helped him on the van by getting hold of his coat collar ; but, poor chap, when I told the crowd that if he had spent his money wisely, and not paid the publican for painting his face and nose, he might have had a chance of getting married, he could not stand any more, so he left me to offer my books for sale, I hope a wiser man.

I left Walsall for a tour round the villages, and got some rich blessings as I went from door to door with books, preaching at the street corners, praying with the sick and with the old people. Let me just tell you of one in this country—a dear old saint that lived in a very humble one-roomed cottage. As I went to the door I knocked, and I heard a shout, "Come in!" so I did; and there the old lady was poring over an old Testament, the leaves yellow with wear, marked all over. A chair, small table, and about as many goods as Elisha had,

except, instead of the candlestick, the old lady had a little wee lamp. Well, I had been out all day, and the snow lay deep, and "Owd Mo." and Drummer were tired; so I said to the dear old lady, "You seem to love Jesus; why don't you get out of this old hut?" "Not till I go to heaven," she said. "Well," I said, "supposing we had a cup of tea together; I feel rather cold." It made her look, did that, for she had only parish pay; but she asked me if I had got a pot, so I said, "Why?" "Oh!" she said, "I don't get many visitors, and have not much room, so I only keep this one." "All right, we can join." When she was mashing tea, you would have thought, as I did, she looked that she was counting every leaf of the tea, so I said, "Put some in, mother; you have told me God has always, so far, stuck to His promise. He has never seen you short all these fourscore years." "Nay, lad, He never has; but if He sees me wasting, He will not be responsible!" "Go on, mother, put some in. A gentleman gave me a packet of tea as I came along; I am going to give it you." It looked as if the old lady

had got new legs

for a few minutes, she was so nimble after that. Praise God! with her parish pay, she could spare a cup of water. I believe she will be nearer to Jesus Christ than those people who are hoarding up great fortunes, while hundreds of people are starving and the Gospel of Christ is being crippled for lack of funds.

CHAPTER VII.

DRUMMER AND MOSES ON THEIR TRAVELS.

WHEN my friend David left me at Bilston, it seemed dark for many a day. Being a sweet singer, he was missed from the “Ark.” Well, I was left with a new man and the old horse to do the best I could.

We came on our way all through the black country, working from door to door offering our books for sale. Some places I came to touched my heart. Drink and gambling had cursed the home; children and wife covered with rags—clean, but pale; the bit of colour that was once in her cheek when at the altar rail with the man that promised to love her, had all gone. I could not say “good morning” here and “God bless you,” well knowing the children was going to school without a crust; so a threepenny loaf of bread and the word of prayer we left with them cheered me, and blessed them, for one day at least. “As ye did it unto these, ye have done it unto Me.”

When we was in the country, and not many houses for miles, we had time to look round ; for Drummer, the old horse, had travelled a long way, and he was one that did not belong to the “Forward Movement.” He was like a great many of our so-called religious people of to-day—he did not

believe in excitement. Some church officers, they don't believe in revivals, and they say, "What is the use of getting our chapels dirty and the seats filthy? for the people that profess to get converted don't stand!" Thank God "Owd Mo." was converted in the fire! But the first time that I went into a Methodist chapel, one young lady that was by the side of her father in the next pew looked over at my poor clothes, as if to say, "What are they going to bring next I wonder?" Would to God that every church and chapel was thrown open, and every seat free for all comers, and the caste from our places of worship removed, and that every one might be filled with the Holy Ghost!

We had service at Brownhills, making our way by Wolverhampton to Rochdale for the valedictory service. Had some good services by the way; some warm receptions, and some

very cold ones.

I remember one morning at Stoke sleeping in the van; it was so cold that I had to get up in the wet and damp weather at three o'clock in the morning to run about to get the blood to work. But, you know, the Master has gone through it all, so we had His loving sympathy. Praise God!

I knew the master of the workhouse near Sandbach, so as it was getting late I put up Drummer, had a short service in the town, came back to the poorhouse, and billeted there. Day after, just when I was leaving, my heart was well-nigh broken. Coming along the country road, I saw a man and

a woman, four children—nice children; and the woman, you could see the lady in her style and manners; and you could see how drink had done its work in the man—a schoolmaster of no mean order; and she had been a schoolmistress, and through no fault of her own she had to be separated from her children in the poorhouse! I wept when I saw that dear woman at the supper-table, looking over to get a glance at her lad, while I was giving a short address. Oh, what broken hearts the cursed drink and gambling has made in this Bible England! Man, give it up! Think of those you have taken from a good home, and have promised to love and cherish; and for the sake of the dear children that God has given you to care for, be a man!

Coming along, the rain came down in torrents; we got benighted between Stafford and Ashton—too late to put the horse in a stable, as no one could find us any. So I did my best to keep the horse warm outside; and he managed to keep warm inside, for he got to a large sack of oats that ought to have lasted to Rochdale, and he finished the lot! I was afraid to give him water after that, as we could hardly get him inside the shafts as it was. But we did our best, and came gently along, until we got to Ashton; and one of the ministers, seeing us going by his door weary and tired out, shouted, “Is that ‘Owd Mo.’?” “Yes, sir.” “Will you have a wash and a cup of tea?” “Oh! thank you,” said I; “we are nearly worn out.” His kindness will never be forgotten. I warrant the

Master has it down in His book in heaven. We prayed that God would reward him, our friend Rev. R. Martin.

Well, we came along to a market being held near Oldham. A poor fellow that had called with his wages at the beerhouse, instead of taking it to his wife for the grocer, came to upset us, and asked some silly questions. Of course, when a man spends his wages in the wrong place—spending money for drink that ought to buy bread for his children—he must be silly. And he pushed through the crowd crying, “Eh, mister, who was Cain’s wife?” So he was told that I did not know, as I was not there when they were married; but I told him I knew more about *his* wife. Both man and wife cried out, “What do you know about her?” So to pacify the wife I told her that I knew she had made a bad bargain by marrying the man she had got; and they both said, “Yes, that was right!”

Well, my friends, we left the market with glad hearts, knowing we had left some solid, good reading behind; not the trashy reading that is doing so much harm to-day among our people, both old and young. Landing at Rochdale for the first time with the “Ark,” Mrs. Champness gave us all a welcome; and the poor horse was glad of two days’ rest, as well as the men.

I had come to Rochdale on purpose for the valedictory, to see our first dear brethren off to Africa—dear David and our friend Chisnall. You will know that dear Pilgrim has finished his course—

has gone out of the race. Now he is singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

After this we went about the town and circuit, selling a good many books and praying with the people. From Rochdale we visited Heywood Market, and we had a poor time. Mr. Kaye was with me with his cornet; but we could not get a tune out of it, as he said it had got some

dirt in the pipe.

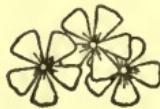
That put me in mind of some Christians that wanted the world with one hand and the Saviour with the other. Some good brother on the market (my co-worker at this time was Brother Heal) said, “‘Mo.’ I thought you was going to have a service?” “Well,” said I, “have we not had one, for I have been talking from six o’clock till now? What time is’t brother?” “About ten o’clock.” So I had to say if I had had no service he had better start one, “because we are going to Rochdale, as we have not taken for books the price of our market fees and paraffin for our lamps!” We also went to Bury, Union Street. We had the caravan at the chapel door, while I gave a short address at the Local Preachers’ Convention. We had a good time. I shall not forget landing at my own home, Farnworth, on the market ground, with the

old gipsy van

and poor old Drummer. Some said one thing about the horse, then someone else made remarks.

"Take notice, if 'Owd Mo.' some day does not get drunk, and sell the lot." A good number of my old mates bought books ; some of them for the first time for many years—good books. Before leaving we opened Crompton Street Mission-room, which soon was too small for the people. So after that we opened the Mission at Longcauseway, which has proved to be a great blessing to many a home.

We don't count how many souls have been saved, as we would rather count them by quality and not quantity. But all through our travels we have heard the cry, "What must I do to be saved?" To God we give the glory.



CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THE PREACHER FARED.

WHEN I got to Farnworth with the "Ark," I caused a great surprise, going to the market inspector for a stand for a Bible-van. He looked at me, and said, "Yes, I will give thee room to stand, and charge thee nothing for it." Friends, this was on the spot where I had many a time been stripped to fight, and where I used to sing the drunkard's song. Never shall I forget that Saturday night, when I gave out that verse—

"But, O the power of grace divine !
In hymns we now our voices raise,
Loudly in strange hosannas join,
And blasphemies are turned to praise !"

Then, with heart full of love for my old mates, with tears I prayed to God for help, and did not pray in vain. That evening the men that I had gambled with and been at the ale-bench with, and others of my neighbours, spent over nine pounds for Bibles and good books; and, praise God! some of the seed sown that evening on the market-ground within a few yards where I was born, both first and second time, is growing to-day. We modern Methodists want to pray more for the spirit of the Master and of the old Methodist preachers. I thank God that I have been counted worthy to go through

a little of John Wesley's and brave John Nelson's experience ; for we have seen places, both village and town, where the Christian people thought we had no appetite, and myself and dear Brother Bond knew what it was to take our mugs and dip in the running stream and get as much sand as water to drink to our bread and butter. But we praised God for all that was past, and trusted for what was to come. I remember being in one town ; freezing and snowing very keen it was. No one asked me to a bed that day. I sent my Brother home for a few days' holiday. Three services inside and out. No one asked me to have a meal ; so the last service I preached from Elisha and the Shunamite, "And she constrained him to eat bread." Of course my points were these :

"The dear Shunamites are not all dead ; but not many are living in this part.

"If some great preacher had been coming, two or three homes would have been found for him.

"Of course your prayer is very good that 'Owd Mo.' may be long spared to preach the Gospel in the market-places and in the church is all very well. But seeing to-day that it is Sunday, and we belonging to the Joyful News Mission neither buy nor sell on the Sunday, having had no breakfast or dinner, a cup of warm tea and bit of bread would have done more good than all your prayers.

"Elisha will never come here ; he has gone to heaven. But some poor local preacher might come. Don't treat him like you have treated me. If you do, he will have to starve or bring his own food."

These people, you see, they only forgot ; for the morning after, in the midst of deep snow, one lad was at the "Ark" door six in the morning, shouting "My uncle has sent you some roast meat and cakes." I was just down on my knees thanking God, shivering with a cold chill, as I could not buy a bed in the place. I thanked God for the mercies of another night. Just then a big fellow came to the van. "Hollo!" he shouted, "here am I." "What is it?" "Have brought thee a pint of warm tea." So we shouted, "Glory!" He was one that had been brought to God out of great depths of sin through the Salvation Army. He is like my friend Bailey, a converted china and pot seller. I have met him at many fairs and markets since. We often talk about the pot of tea.

But, oh ! the next place—what a difference ! My horse was taken to the warm stable; after visiting for three hours from door to door, selling that cold day two pounds' worth of books, going along at two o'clock, I did enjoy the tea, toast, and egg (manufactured by their own fowl—none of your crate eggs !). Well, we had the village chapel full, and men, women, and children born for glory. Praise God for the trials ! Endure to the end, my brother, and some day thou shall wear a crown !



CHAPTER IX.

HOW HE GOT HIS NEW HORSE AND "ARK."

BUT I was getting tired of Drummer; he was like a lot of us—he wanted too much of his own way. Sometimes, if you wanted him to turn, he would go straight on. Coming one night from a meeting rather late, through the city of Manchester, I was keeping at the back of a waggon (of course we had to keep at back; we could not pass anyone). Drummer wanted to turn; we wanted him straight. But, no; he got the bit between his teeth, and run the "Ark" against the lamp pillar. The policeman, hearing me shout, wanted the name; but I told him I would

rather he took the horse !

He thought the name was less trouble, so he took it; but we heard no more of it, for which I praised God. This led me to pray for a new horse.

I was staying with dear (Grandpa) Charles Champness, and I spent a night's prayer under his roof, asking the Lord to send me money for a younger and sharper horse, as I believe in prayer. I knew it would come. So for a few hours in the early morning, long before day, I sat down to write and tell my friends in the places where God had blessed us about my needs, and money came back

in every letter save one, so that in less than a week I had seven pounds. The first money towards my new horse, Charley, was from

a little lad—

sixpence, with the father’s pound—Mr. R. H., of Bilston! Praise God for good lads that are willing to give to make the world brighter! So the money came, till enough was sent to buy a successor to poor old Drummer.

I did not name this praying for a new horse to my co-worker, Brother Thompson, at this time, nor to my master or mistress, until I had got a few pounds together. Then I wrote Mr. C. Heap, asking him his advice about Drummer. As he gave it us, it was only fair that he should know that Drummer had done good service for the Mission, but that the time had come for us to get a younger one. So Drummer was sold to a good man at Widnes for the large sum of

five pound ten shillings.

He served his master well for eighteen months, and then poor old Drummer died, not very full of years. I wrote to my friend, Mr. G. Okell, of Farnworth, telling him I wanted a good young horse cheap. In all this I was directed through prayer, and God’s hand was in it all; for a dear man at Walkden, Mr. N. Berry, let us have Joyful News “Charley” cheap. New horse and new harness did not seem to fit in with the old “Ark;” and I had by persevering and practice got into what I should call a

fair salesman, and on market-days I was soon without stock. So I went to God again about a new "Ark;" told master and Mrs. Champness. It was put in the "Joyful News," and in a short time all our kind friends responded, the new "Ark" was launched, and we brought it down from West Hartlepool, and our dear Editor opened it on the Town Hall Square, Leeds.

Some of "Owd Mo.'s" Caravan mates.

I can't think of the names of all the men that has travelled with me. I must thank God for some of the best and noblest of young men. Others of them that I could name used to sing, "My all is on the altar;" but when it came to rising early in the morning, cleaning the horse, going from door to door with books, they turned coward, and said, "God had not called them to Van work." Some returned to Rochdale, others to their homes (best place for a man that wants a place with all the work taken out of it). But, thank God! I have had some good men. I have found, while looking back the years that have passed, some of my best helpers are still making their mark in the Church of their choice; and although I have not been the governor of any college, thank God! some of my pupils that have been trained in the Joyful News caravan—I mean those who have been willing to learn—are in the ministry. We have Brother Stoney right away in Newfoundland, Archer in Canada, Robertson in City Mission, Liverpool. And then we have had the pleasure of helping to make Evangelists

for the villages, who have done and are doing noble work for the Home Missionary Society—I mean my dear friends, E. Philipson and J. Gledhill. We must not forget our dear Brother Fryer, who did good work with the "Ark;" and I believe the van work gave him a good start for China, where he laboured for some years. Then we had Brother Smith, who had a little training, and is still doing work for the Master. There is no better training school than the Joyful News "Ark," if the scholars will do their duty and are willing to learn; but there is some people that knows more than the schoolmaster. It gives a man courage, the fresh air he gets braces him; but it gives him new experiences which he will never find in books, and if he is a bit proud it will soon bring it to light. We had a great many others—Brother Wiles, who did well, and Brother Rennison, and others besides—too many for me to mention, though I am very thankful for them all.

Charley proved rather too light for the new "Ark;" and I have always found that if you will not guide yourself, and if you will acknowledge God, He will direct your paths. Of course horse-dealing was not in my line; but we had only one horse for two vans. But getting to York we got one on trial for a month. But this was another Drummer—strong, very slow, but sure. He could travel a long way if you give him plenty of time to do it in. I think the owner said he was fourteen years old. Coming on to Wakefield, the people

kept shouting out, "Stop and give the elephant a feed!" or, "Get inside out of the wet!" But, however, the Lord found us a good horse at Wakefield; and, going on for six years now, it has been a credit to the Mission—I mean "Janet." I believe my friend Bond, who has done good work in Western Africa, got

his first missionary experience

with Janet and the Joyful News "Ark," and made hundreds of friends in England that he never would have made. For I must say this, that in the thousands of miles I have travelled, nine places out of ten we have been well cared for, and we have found all over the country people like the Shunamite that constrained Elisha to eat bread. You know, friends, I could tell you of some cold places, but will not hurt your feelings by putting them in print; for God knows the people that give a cup of cold water.



CHAPTER X.

HIS COMPASSION FOR THE POOR.

“O that I could in every place,
By faith behold Jehovah’s face,
 My strict observer see ;
Present my heart and reins to try,
And feel the influence of His eyes
 For ever fixed on me !”

IT would be almost impossible to tell you all I should like in this volume about the markets and towns and different people we have come across. I don’t want to mention names of either ministers and laymen ; but I have been entertained these last few years in the poorest cottage and the large mansion, and, thank God ! the humblest has been enjoyed as well as the richest. The farthing candle has not given as big light as the rich man’s gas from the chandeliers. But in the house of the old widow that has nothing coming in but parish pay, before retiring we kneeled down, and the old woman in the stone cottage with bare walls, minus pictures, has thanked God for the mansion in her Father’s house, and for the crown she was going to wear instead of the widow’s cap. Won’t the bells of heaven ring when some of these dear old saints have fought their way to heaven through much poverty and trouble, and tribulation !

"Thank God!" said a dear old creature one day, when a friend of mine put her into a tram-car and paid her fare. When the tram got to the end, she had to be helped out. "Where are you for, mother?" said he; "how far have you to walk?" And with tears she said, "Only to the workhouse. It will not be for long; I have nearly finished my course." This was through no fault of her own. I hope, if this book comes into the hands of any son or daughter whose mother is spending her last days in the poorhouse, you will not rest until you have got her by your own fireside, else God may pay you back with your own coin.

Going along the road with my "Ark," I kept my eyes open; but sometimes they filled with tears. One day, in a country road, I drew on one side while a pony and trap passed by. In the trap was an old lady. It looked to me she was weeping. A man was driving—he hardly deserves the name that is given him. Getting near the village I saw another woman weeping. "What is the matter, missis?" She said, "Did you meet a trap going along?" "Yes." "Was that old lady crying?" "Yes, she was." "Well we, my husband and me, has kept her as long as we can, but cannot do it any longer. She is not much related. Our little farm has gone down. Yonder man that is in the trap with her is her son, and he is well able to keep her. But he has told her that he will give her a ride into the country; but he will put her down in the poorhouse, and she is ninety-five years of age." She died six weeks or so after, in the same work-

house, with a broken heart. One of my friends has got her photograph. I wept when I saw it, for to think of the son's cruelty. Readers, share your last crust with your parents, and let them have the best chair in your house and the warmest corner, and God will bless you. "Them that honour Me, I will honour."

"Where are you for now, Moses?" said a friend one day. "Off towards Liverpool," said I, "to help our dear friend, Rev. C. Garrett." "Oh, you will not sell many books at that place." But you know that false prophets still exist. Praise God! I not only sold books, but I helped to save the fallen, feed the hungry, rescue the perishing, lift up the devil's castaway (as Whitefield said); and, praise God! the seed did not all fall among the thorns, as some of it that was sown is bearing and bringing forth fruit to the glory of God.

"But how did you get on with the roughs at Liverpool?" Well, my friends, in these places I try to get the children. I said to the Mission-hall keeper in Mansfield Street, "Do you think you can fill the hall with children if I can find them a cake each?" We had no call to send bills out; in ten minutes we had the place crowded, and poor little things, about two hundred of them, and

not a whole shirt or boot

among them all! Of course a Joyful News Evangelist could ill afford to buy two hundred cakes; but I knew the same God that told the widow to look after Elijah could speak night after to some man I was preaching to, and so He did.

As I left the pulpit in Great Homer Street Chapel, a good Christian man came and put ten shillings in my hand, and said, "That will do for more cakes," and they got them. Praise God for answer to prayer! My friend A. Lee, one of the missionaries, got them some hot coffee. It touched the hearts of the parents; and I believe, as the outcome of that visit, one of the lowest, and one that had been bound with the fetters and chains of the devil—a poor woman many times in prison through the accursed drink, with broken bones—is now enjoying that peace which passeth all understanding.* I find that these dear, drink-cursed people take the plain Gospel in more than some of our young people that come Sunday after Sunday, and laugh at you if you speak to them about giving their hearts to God. Yes, the old Book is true, "the last shall be first." Reader, if unsaved, pray that God will make you clean now, and ask for the old paths, "where is the good way, and walk therein."

Leaving the great city, we came along, praising God that we had been of some help in God's hands in trying to save a lost world. "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few." A great many Christians are saying, "There is yet four months," and

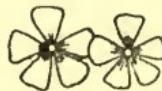
**Satan is reaping what God's people
ought to reap.**

Committees are planning how we are to retain our young people. The best way, as far as I have

* The last time I heard of this poor woman she was dying in a Liverpool hospital, through the sins of her youth.

found out, is to get them saved from sin in their youth, and find them some work in the vineyard.

Very often it is the case that, when young people start to work for God, some of the dear old people will say, "Aye, we shall have to be careful, or young So-and-so will get too fast." God help us to "loose them and let them go." It was the *colt* the Master rode on.



CHAPTER XI.

IN THE MARKET-PLACES.

LANDING at a small town not far from Liverpool, two policemen came to examine me, the horse and "Ark," as some men had turned out with one from some place, had sold the lot, and had run away. They thought they had found the "missing link." However, after close inspection, they let me go, saying they were sorry, as they thought they were on the wrong track. My friends, the grace of God always keeps us in the right track; I shouted "glory," and went on my way rejoicing and praising God.

You friends would like to know how I have gone on in some of the market-places. In one town we was promised a stand close by the public-house door, the ground belonging to the publican; but if we took it, we had to pay a big rent and say nothing against his trade or drink. Any one that has suffered as I had done could not be shut out from speaking against one of the greatest evils of our day, that is robbing and slaying thousands of our friends and neighbours and little children; so I did not get the stand. But the Chief Constable gave me leave to stand by the Town Hall steps without fee or charge. I had rather a hard time of it that evening. On the publican's ground, four yards from where I stood, was the quack doctor, drawing

teeth, curing rheumatics, and all other diseases ; and to lull the pain, he had a black man on the front of his car playing some beautiful music—a big pair of clap-cans. But, praise God ! that evening before eleven o'clock we took for Bibles and other good books over ten pounds. I have never believed in letting the devil have all his own way since God saved me from his clutches. So when the black man stopped while the quack talked, I got *my* turn—not clap-cans, but

the shovel and frying-pan.

The Saturday after the doctor left for other quarters, leaving me alone for a season. I have met him since on other markets ; but he always got as far from me as he could.

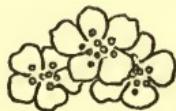
On one of the days I was there a collier shouted to me. “Mo !” says he, “don’t speak so strong against the publicans.” “Why?” said I ; “what benefit are they to a town?” “Oh, a great deal, when a fellow is bringing a large family up. It’s not long since that the publican across yonder gave me an old coat to go to the coal-pit in.” “Why ; —did he so?” I said. “If tha would rather wear old ones than new ones, come to me and tha can have an old one every day for a new one.” “Oh!” said he, “I never thought about that. It’s *me* that’s buying new ones for the publican, and I am wearing t’ owd ones out. But I’ll stop that, and get mine first-hand !” I hope he has stood to his promise. If he has, the wife and children has found a great change.

Travelling about from town to town, and through most of the villages of England and Wales, I have seen some cruel sights, as for many years, when health permitted, with books in hand, I have gone from door to door. I have seen the starving wife and children, and bare walls without a picture; homes not fit to be called homes—no chairs, no furniture of any kind. In one home a poor idiot woman, sitting on an old box almost naked; could see through her old clothes the bare skin on her body—filthy from head to foot; on the table a piece of dry bread, an old black tin with a piece of bacon in. The neighbours said they had not seen her outside her door for six months; they had often heard screams in the house, but none had the courage to go inside to see what was the matter. Husband, a collier, and a son about nineteen, had gone to the pit the same day; getting good money at that time. But they could never find enough for drink and gambling. I reported the case to some of the guardians and police; but they said they could do nothing. Had a man treated his donkey or horse like that, they would have given him three months in jail. Would to God that all men and women who profess to love God and their fellows would give up the accursed drink, for Christ's sake and their weaker brethren and sisters, and give up sending the bloated brewers to Parliament, and putting them in our county and district councils! There has been a great many people old and young lost at sea and colliery explosions, and through

other accidents; but the

drink has slain more than all put together.

O Lord, will Thou help us to slay this great lion before it slays England? Reader, if you have not given it up, do so now for your dear children's sake, and help to put away that which is filling our prisons and workhouses with our best-talented men and women!



CHAPTER XII.

LITTLE CHARLIE'S BOOTS, AND THE PRODIGAL SON.

ONE day a little lad was being taken to jail for stealing—first sent to prison, then to the reformatory school. His father, that spent three-parts of his time at the ale-bench, told him not to cry. The lad, turning on the father, said, “If you had shown me a better example, I should not be going to jail now.” I was hard, and cursed by drink at the time that this conversation was going on. But that lad made me both to weep and to think. Praise God! those words never left me; and they helped to convert me from the errors of my evil ways.

Coming along the road one day, a lad stopped my horse. “Now, what have you done that for? Do you want to buy a book?” “No, sir.; I want to tell you about that big house. I saw you looking at it.” “All right, my boy; go on. I am always willing to learn anything good.” “Well,” said he, “my father helped to build it.” “Aye, did he? What is he—a bricksetter?” “No.” “A joiner?” “No.” “Well, what does he do? Did he get foundation out?” “No. It’s been built by a brewer; and some people call it ‘Fool’s Palace,’

and father was one of them ! ”

I was telling this story one day in front of the public-house, as I believe in John Wesley's doctrine, "Go where the people need you most." That day a man was leaving his home with the last two shillings he had taken from his wife—money that was put up towards the rent. From that story I went on to another, about a man and his friend looking at me one evening while speaking. They both had seen me many times before; but being better dressed than formerly they came to me. One said, "'Mo.' is that thee?" So I said, "It looks like me, does it not?" "Aye," said he, "it does. But *tha's moulted!*!" So I told them what had made the difference was getting converted and getting better companions, going to the house of God instead of going to the "Royal Oak" and "Rose and Crown." I was looking after my own "roses" at home, and, if faithful, some day shall have a "crown" of my own. One of these believed, took my advice, got converted, took home his wages, bought his own children boots and clothes, and went to the house of God with them.

Well, the man with the two shillings, hearing this story while at the public-house door, came away without going inside; came to the crowd of people I was selling books to; and without me knowing anything about it, or what had led him to think, asked for the two books which was then having a large sale. One of them was "Owd Mo." and the other was the fourpenny volume of "Three People." The following morning, when we was leaving the place—we was putting Janet, our horse,

in the shafts—this man came up, with tears on his cheeks, and with him a little lad, about three years of age. He told me how the night before, he left my van, and went home. “The little fellow I now have in my arms was wet-footed yesterday ; but that story you told kept me out of the ale-house. With a little to the one shilling and seven-pence after buying the books, little

Charlie has got a pair of boots.”

This was a Welshman. Praise God for what God enabled me to do in South Wales ! We had lots of opposition in this part ; but all came from the same dirty spring—the publican. Their gains was going, so they cried out, “What has thou got to do with us ? Leave our coast.” Of course we did, after going through all the towns and villages we could find, and helping to bless scores of men, women, and children, and trying to plant light instead of darkness.

In one of these towns I had got permission to stand from the Mayor. The gentleman across the way, seeing what we was up to, came and inquired what I was going to do. “Sell books, and preach the Gospel,” I replied,—“the Gospel of Christ to dying men.” He cursed me for awhile, and said I was going to injure his trade, standing so near his door, and we must not open out ; if we did, he would smash me and the waggon too. Of course I heard all he said ; but it did not frighten me much. All he did was to employ about six roughs, that he had primed with some of the dregs that he

could not sell in his bar, to knock with big sticks on a stone that was by us. They got tired out, and left us in the field to take that evening seven pounds for good books. Had we left when told by this servant of the Prince of Darkness I should have missed a chance of a bit of work that angels would be proud to do ; that is, helping to save a man.

This, as you will see, was on the Saturday. The Tuesday following, thinking of catching the early market, we was at the "Ark" in good time. Coming down the road leading to the "Ark," I saw a young man. It was pouring wet, and he was drenched wet through ; all the clothing he had on was not worth sixpence. Calling him into the "Ark" out of the rain, I said : "Young fellow, you have been better off than you are now. Now, it is not fit to keep you here in those wet clothes. Here, take this money ; get some food, get your clothes dry, and come again." But he would not leave until he had told me this touching story. Says he : "I have been to the river to drown myself, as I am tired of living as I have done in the past." "What age are you?" "Twenty-three years, sir." "What's your trouble?" "Well, sir, I robbed my master at S——. I gave myself up to the police ; they wired to my master. He would not prosecute ; it was only four pounds. And it is the Empire Music-hall and Theatre that has cursed me. That is not all, sir. I have broke my dear mother's heart, and almost ruined father's business in Scotland. Will you wire father, and tell him where I am?" It was done, and two days after a

very touching letter came from the old man, saying what a bad son he had been ; but "if he has got converted, as you say, will you try to get him work down in that part? if you cannot, let me know." Me and other friends did our best ; but because the poor lad had lost his character, no one would give him another chance—only a working-man with a large family, that wanted some cloth making up : he was a tailor and cutter-out. So to the dear old father I sent word that no work could be got. Postal order came to me, I bought the ticket, sent him home to his father, he was well received, and is now doing well. The opportunity for that bit of Christian charity would have helped me to

have stood all the smashing.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." The greatest blessing comes after opposition. Go on, brethren, in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son. The crowning day is coming.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE ORGAN THAT WENT TO CHINA.

But we have a great deal of work to do before the people of the world are won for Christ. There is so much discord in our Churches, too many striving after honour instead of purity of heart. The greatest sceptics to-day are not in market-places ; wherever I have travelled—and that has been thousands of miles, I have found the people hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and waiting for someone to give them a kind word. When I saw the first old Methodist chapel in the world, at Bristol, I got down on my knees in the room where Wesley and the other old Methodist preachers used to sleep, and I thanked God for such men, that had suffered hardship and the sneers and scoffs of the world for Christ's sake and their fellows'.

I have often said that every young local preacher ought to have twelve months' training with a Mission Van, especially those that are candidates for the ministry. It's wonderful what a man can learn if he is willing and keeps his ears open. Coming along the road one day, I saw a lad with hands and mouth fully employed. Of course I watched him for a short time ; then I said at last, " My boy, what are you making ? " And without any shame, " Oh, sir," said he, " don't you know ? "

"If I had known, I should not have made the trouble to ask." "Well," said he, "I am making a smoke." "Why, do you make your own about here?" "Yes; you see I am making mine." "Why, does tha smoke!" I said. "Yes, sir." "Why, what age does tha call thyself?" "Oh, I am nine!" "And what does tha smoke for?" "Well, you are very inquisitive; why, my teacher smokes." "Shame on him!" "And I saw a waggonette-load of preachers going out last Sunday, and they were all smoking but one." "Well," said I, "thank God for one wise man among them!" "And," said he, "my father smokes." "Well, now, look here; thou art not as old as thy teacher, and thou art not as old as those preachers tha saw, and I am sure thou art not as old as thy father." "No, I am not," said he, "But if I live long enough I shall be, and I shall want some practice."

This was a Yorkshire lad; but we have them in Lancashire. I shall not say that either smoking or drinking a glass of beer will keep a man from being a Christian; but, brother, you will be a better Christian without it, and will have far more influence over the young in the Sunday School. The young people read you and me, if they don't read their Bibles. Jeroboam not only sinned himself, but he taught Israel to sin. God's grace is not much if it cannot cleanse us, and give us victory over every idol. Thank God it can! We have proved it. And I say, brother, down on your knees, and never leave until God has cleansed His temple, and made it fit for His own use.

We can't catch men with a dirty bait.

We must walk in the light as He is in the light, before we have fellowship with God or men.

I have had some blessed times in visiting the homes of the people, and times too of distress, as some of the homes that I have been into have not been half as nice as the brewer's stable or dog-kennel. One I went in one Sunday I cannot forget. Father a drunkard, pigeon-flyer, gambler, and a great many more things that made life not worth living. However, I heard three men cursing ; so going up to them, I had a word with them, and rebuked them for the sin they was committing. One of these men walked away. So following him up, he went into what we must call a home, for there was a wife and four children. Two wooden-bottom chairs, an old table that had seen better days, was all the stock ; only two boxes in the corner that the favourite pigeon was kept in. I got him to the men's meeting ; he came in his old ragged coat. After service, he went home, kept from the drink, came to the night's service, got converted. He sang in the open air every night, his old mates shouting out after he had done singing some beautiful solos, "Aye, he is singing for "Owd Mo." this week. Next week he'll be drunk!" But being near Christmas, his motto was, when he wrote me a letter some weeks after, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." God grant that he has kept up to the teaching of these Bible truths !

Drawing my horse up one day in a north country village, the colliers was leaving the coal-pit. I knew that we should not sell many books ; but I began to preach the word. The men stood round until I had done speaking. One man among them, tears run down his black face as he went off to his home ; his past life had almost ruined him. His wife, knowing that I was going to preach in the Wesleyan Chapel, had spent hours that day in prayer, that her husband, who had just been six months in jail for poaching, and only worked a few days since his release, might be inclined to go to the chapel. She could see that something was not right with him when he got home ; he had no relish for food. His next-door neighbour, being a good man, and a local preacher belonging to the *Primitives*, went into the man's house. "Joe, what's think to ; should us go to this service at B——? There is "Owd Mo." there to-night. Come along, let's off ; it's about time." The wife and friend was a long while before they prevailed, but prayer was answered—they brought their man. While I was speaking that evening, the man came rushing on the rostrum ; being a powerful, big fellow, he pulled me down on my knees, and we both prayed and wept together.

"Jesus ! the prisoner's fetters breaks,
And bruises Satan's head ;
Power into strengthless souls He speaks,
And life into the dead."

Brother reader, it does not matter how low you have sunk in sin. The precious blood of Christ

can cleanse you now from all sin, if you are willing. If you have been as long at the ale-bench or at the gambling-table as the man was at the pool which had an infirmity thirty and eight years, the same Christ says, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

A remarkable answer to prayer.

One Monday afternoon in W—— market-place, when I had done speaking, a friend shouted for me to come down from the van when all the people was supplied with books. I came down; not knowing the man, I said, "What is it you want?" "Don't you know me?" said he. "No, I can't say I do." "But you did once. We was on the racecourse together many times; but, praise God! Jones as well as yourself has got converted—now five years ago, and instead of fighting and drinking and being a disgrace to many, I have preached in many of our chapels, and am just coming on the plan. Will you come and have a cup of tea with me to-morrow, and look at my home, and see what the Lord has done for my dear wife and myself?" "Where do you live?" "Oh, it is five miles from here; but it is a good road. I want to give you a little organ for your van. We have got a large one, so you can have the other." Knowing that our dear brother William Argent had been praying for one, I got the organ, gave it to him, and the dear lad

took it with him to China.

This man was converted from the lowest depths of sin and iniquity; a fighter and dog-runner, and

living near the canal-side. Many times his wife has been out late at night in search of him when coming home drunk, to protect him from being drowned. The devil and drink tried hard to put it into his head, when going home, to drown his guardian and dear wife. But the devil has been defeated. Christ's grace has conquered.

This dear collier and his wife, now living near Birmingham, took me to a large clothier's shop, had me measured for a good suit of black, and sent them on to Rochdale. The organ has got broken, the clothes worn out; but our prayer goes out on this brother and sister's behalf that they may be long spared to work in the Master's service.

My friends, if you want your home to be made bright and cheerful, come over on to the Lord's side; shun the public-house and evil companions. Instead of buying the publican new furniture and new piano, buy your children the clothes and food they need. Don't be so selfish and mean in spending your money on yourself, while the wife and children you promised to love are starving at home. In my mission tour I have a lot to do with poor drunken men; and with all my heart I pity them and pray for them and weep, for it is only the sovereign grace of God that has kept me from a drunkard's grave, which many of my relations are filling to-day.



CHAPTER XIV.

HOW "MO." USES PICTURES.

SOME of the people I meet seem to think they are witty, and know a great deal when drink is in, and they always think if they can turn a laugh on you from their mates they have done something wonderful. So one of these poor, deluded, wise men shouted one evening in the market-place : "Hollo, 'Owd Mo.,' tha says a lot about that Bible thou art offering for sale. Now, does tha believe all it says?" Of course I said, "Yes!" "Well, look here ; does tha mean to tell me that donkey we read about spoke to Balaam?" So, looking at my man, I was bound to answer, for the clothes that he was wearing was not worth twopennyworth of salt. So I said, "Look here, brother ; I have read a little about animals, and I have kept a good few myself, and I find out that donkeys has a great deal more sense than men like thee has, because donkeys gets a new coat every year." "Aye, they have," said he ; "for I have not had a new one for many a year." So when the laugh turned, the poor fellow went off, I hope a wiser man.

Drawing up into another village one afternoon, I saw a great many colliers. I believe it was a ball-match coming off for a large stake of money. Looking out for a stand close by, I fixed upon one.

Of course I was told the ground belonged to the publican, and I must move off at once. However, not believing all the man said, I took Janet out of the "Ark," put it in the stable, give it a wisp down a good feed of corn, and asked God to help me to say something to all these gambling colliers. Of course, being close by the public-house, I got, what I expected, a good deal of opposition. So you see, folks, I was not deceived. We tried singing ; that did not seem to be the right bait for the kind of fish we had to deal with. We tried preaching and reciting ; that did not move the people that was so excited — the match that was going on seemed to lay hold of both old and young. So not intending to be "licked," as we say in Lancashire, I brought out a large picture on canvas—the "Joyful News" picture called "Simple Division." The publican, who thought his gains was at stake, by this time had sent one of his "samples" to annoy and upset us. However, I saw he was just the kind of man that would do us service, so I said, "Now, my friend, I want you to speak the truth, and answer me these few questions." "All right," said he; "go on. What's want to know?" So I told him I wanted to know if he was anything like the man in the picture. "In the first place, this man says, 'The pawnbroker has got my clothes. How does this case compare with thine, my friend?'" "Oh, the pawnbroker has got mine!" "Secondly, 'The publican has got my money,' says the picture. Now, brother, I'll warrant this is thy own case." "Oh, it is that! I have not a penny in the world,

and money's gone that ought to pay the rent." "Thirdly, the picture says, 'And I am left with the ticket.'" "Oh," said the man, while moving off, "that mon i' t' picture is better off than me, because I have sold my ticket for drink! But I'll spend no more after this."

I got rather hot on drink, gambling, and other vices that was cursing the homes all over the place, and sold in a very short time hundreds of my own life, and Bibles, and other good books. Praise God, who has so often given us the victory!

The morning after I was at the stable early—five o'clock when I was cleaning Janet; I wanted to get off to get an early market. A collier came to the stable door. "Hollo, 'Mo.!" "Yes?" "Tha was giving some "Joyful News" tracts away yesterday afternoon." "Well, what about it? Did tha not get one?" "Aye, a' got one. It has kept me 'waken all night; and I was reading it at three o'clock this morning, and looking at t' pictures on the other side." "Well, is it worth reading again? Because I will change with thee." "Oh, no," said he; "this has learned me a lesson." "What tract is it?" "Oh, it says, 'Fools' money buys good cows.' Now, look here; in that grass field there, are two cows there?" "Yes; are they yours?" "Nay, not now; they belong to that publican across road. I have helped to buy them; and if I want any o' th' milk they give,

I have to buy that an' all.

When he came to live here, he had to borrow money. He has bought this and another public-house, and he has got a pony and trap; and I have helped to buy the lot. But worst of it is, Brother 'Mo.,' I have been put off two plans as a local preacher, all through the drink."

I pray that every minister and every local and evangelist will sign the pledge for their brothers' sake, and die rather than break the pledge. I have often prayed that this friend has stood to his promise that he would be a fool no longer in buying the publican good cows, and I left him with the words, "Thank God, brother, for the 'Common Sense Tract,' that kept you 'waken when you ought to have been asleep.'" With a shake of the hand I left him, and with tears in his eyes he asked an interest in our prayer, and the verse of the hymn came in my mind :

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night ;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light ;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

Would to God that all Christ's followers would walk in the light, as He is in the light !



CHAPTER XV.

SOME OF HIS “CASES,” BAD AND GOOD.

You, dear readers, beware of the religious hypocrite —those that can spin a long yarn about God, and good prayer-meeting, and how they have seen you before, and how they have been blest under your preaching, and how the sermon inspired them, and all the time they are seeking how to fleece you. After they have talked like that, if they start to beg, bid them “Good morning,” and have done with them. Coming down to the “Ark” one morning, I found one of these gentlemen waiting my arrival. “Good morning, Moses.” “Good morning, sir.” “We had a splendid time last night; I felt if I had not been converted before, last night would have brought me down on my knees. Do you know what I have done this morning? Never made such a mistake as this before. You know it was wet last night?” “Yes.” “It was;—well, you saw me at S—, when you were up in that part. I have just come down here for my health—came just with one suit of clothes. Mine not being dry this morning, I put my brother’s on to come down to the station for a parcel. When getting here I found that my money had been left in the other pockets. Being nearly two miles away, I thought you might lend me one shilling and ninepence until I come down

to the service to-night." He may have forgotten, or missed his way;

I have not seen him since.

I pray that God will save him; and if He does, and the man follows the rule that Zacchæus was led to do, pay back fourfold, I shall have a bit to draw some day. "Well," I said, "that's last money I'll give this week."

But leaving the same town next morning, as we came along, a poor girl about seventeen was limping along. She had great difficulty to walk. "Now," I said, "my lass, what's the matter with you? What are you weeping for?" "Sir," she said, "will you let me ride? I have come all the way from Keighley, and have to go on to Oldham. Father and mother are both dead. I work in the mill; but being short of work, I have been house-keeping for an old lady, helping her downstairs. A few days ago we both fell down, and that is why I am lame." I believed the poor dear girl. As we came along, I said, "How much money have you?" "Only fivepence." "Well, how are you going to get to the end of your journey? It is thirty miles or more from here. It's now ten o'clock; you cannot get there to-night. Poor thing! She could not get two miles an hour, if she wasn't acting; and being done out of the other bit of money, it made me a little doubtful. But as we drew into Denholme, a dear woman shouted out, "Eh! is that Joyful News 'Ark?' Is it 'Owd Mo.?" "Yes." "Well, stop and have some dinner."

So I had the chance then to ask them to never mind getting us any dinner. "But," I said, "there is a girl inside the van; if they would make a good, warm dinner for her, I would pay them." So they did, and I found that what the lass had told me was all correct. She was bruised from head to foot, and, having a girl of my own, it made me think and repent that I said, "No more money-giving." But, however, I give my man the money to go down to the station and pay the girl's fare to Oldham. I sent a letter to my old friend Lindley, of the Medical Mission, to go and find out the address she had given me, and the girl was honest and truthful; so that paid for all the loss that the other smooth-tongued fellow had done me out of.

But, friends, beware! There is a great many of them about that get their living that way, and they live better than some of us do. If you want to find it out, go and take a few meetings in the lodging-houses in some of the large cities and towns. You will find plenty of steaks and onions, and none of your crate Irish eggs—no, new laid ones. They will tell you "such is life," and "they are not cut out for work." But it pays for all the trouble if you can get one of these brothers and sisters

on the Lord's side.

It is a few years since now one of these brethren was converted in a common lodging-house. His wife and four children was in the poorhouse. He had lost the work that he ought to have been engaged in, all through the drink. I believe he

could get, when working, three pound per week at his trade. He had not a friend. He told me, a publican that he had spent a lot of his money with had got him in prison for ten days, for some paltry bit of timber that had been stolen; but having no friends when he came out, he went on in the evil course with both hands earnestly. The image of God had been defaced in this brother; but, having a bit of conscience left in him, he began to think at an open-air service one evening that there was hope for him yet, although he knew, as he said, "I don't deserve any of God's mercy; but Jesus died for me." He came to the Wesleyan Chapel, came out to the rail, poured out his soul to God. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles;" and he went to the lodging-house to tell his old companions he had gotten converted, and that he was going to leave them for better quarters. A dear friend of mine, the schoolmaster in this town, being a man of God, set to work to get our new-converted brother back to the work he had lost through the drink. He saw the foreman and master, and they said, "Although he is one of the best men we have in the shop when off the drink, we cannot turn another man away to put him in. But we will find him something to do." They did. He was not long before he had his old place back, got his mates to sign the pledge, got a little home together, fetched home his wife and children from the workhouse, soon had all the children clothed with good clothes and boots. But his wife, though she had gone through all this poverty and trouble, was anything but a help to her

husband, as he told me, both by mouth and letter, and with tears and almost a broken heart, that she would send the children to school in their old ragged clothes and take the others to pawnshops, after giving her plenty of wages every week. Wives, help your husbands! This brother is still in the good way, earning as a foreman a great salary. Not long since he sent our friend the schoolmaster five pounds towards cleaning the old chapel up he was converted in. This schoolmaster is secretary belonging to the building club at this place, and he told me a short time ago that our friend converted out of the lodging-house brings his money there now, instead of the public-house every week, and is a credit to all that know him, and to the Methodist Church. This dear brother has walked with me fourteen miles on the Sunday to help me in my open-air meeting, and I have seen his old mates weeping many times when he was singing solos, both in market-place and back street. This kind of work

helps to lessen poor rates,

and would in time do away with workhouse, prisons, and policemen, and give us the local veto without Act of Parliament. "When Jesus has found you, tell others the story." You dear brothers and sisters that has gotten discouraged, and given up your services in the cottage, in the lodging-houses, and in the open-air, pray that God will help you to make another start, if you think men like these and the writer is worth saving. God grant we may get back to the old Methodist fashion.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT THE DEVIL LOST AND CHRIST GAINED.

SATAN is not going to lose these trophies of his without a fight. Paul and Silas were beaten in the market-place and put in prison for this kind of work. I myself have been called mad, and some of the people called Methodists said that "Owd Mo." had "got a slate off." Well, praise God! the slate coming off, the light and fire went right down in the heart, and I would rather my bones rotted in prison than the souls of my fellows should be "turned into hell with all the nations that forget God." Ministers, locals, evangelists, and all other workers for God, let it not be said of us, we have never warned them of the wrath to come. The greatest of teachers and preachers said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." "Go work in my vineyard to-day." Not to make plans, not to organise, or to committee meetings, but to *work*. This command belongs to all Christian workers. Sammy Hick said he had only one talent, but he was not going to let the man with ten have it. So, friends, let us be up and doing. Some of us is not able to give much money, but we can give ourselves.

"Does religion pay?"

said a man one day to an old friend and companion of mine who had spent a fortune he had left him. It only took him twelve months to spend hundreds of pounds. Then he had to sing, like many more have had to do, "Where is your friend when your money is gone?" One night, while I was selling the book "Jasper and his Chums," this friend took one. As I thought I knew the features, I gave him the book on this condition, saying, "Jack, sin has already made an old man on thee. Take that book; if it does not make thee weep, it is thine for nothing and sixpence with it." I didn't know he had been to my meeting the night before, until he said with tears on his cheeks, "Moses, I have wept a great deal since last night's service at R—. I have come for advice." "All right, my brother; and if I can give it thee, thou shall have it for nothing. I have had to pay two guineas many times, but thine shall be gratis." "Now," said he, "tha knows that gambling ruined me when I had a large business. Instead of having one of the largest butchers' shops in this town (which I knew he might have had), I am going round to public-houses selling a few twopenny pies; wife and children are naked. I have a pigeon-fly on; ten shilling is now down; two pound is the stake. I have told my mates that the match would not have to go on, that I had signed the pledge against drink and gambling. Now," said he, "what would you do?" "Go home, my brother, kill the bird, and,

being used to making pies,

put it inside; and if thou cannot eat it, bring it down to the market here, and I will buy it from you." Poor fellow ! he went home, and after a great struggle, got the victory, killed the bird ; and his old mates, when they came to give him two pounds for it, found only the skin and feathers. I had this brother last August on the platform with me in his own town. I said, "Now, Jack, a lot of these people know thee about here ; give them a few words." His weight is almost thirteen stone. Looks ten years younger than he did three years since. He could only say a few words ; but the large crowd of people was melted to tears, and especially those who knew how his wife and children had had to suffer through his wickedness.

Readers, if the devil has got any of you in the same chains that our dear brother was in, we have the same Christ to offer you, the same precious blood can cleanse you from all sin, and, praise God ! the same grace can keep you from idols that is cursing your home and children. Our friend Jack had no friends before. But now "John," with nice watch and chain, debts nearly paid off, clothed and in his right mind, has hundreds! The psalmist was right : "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But we know different. Satan don't make these changes in men and homes. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."



CHAPTER XVII.

CHANGED "CHARLIE."

GIVING tracts to some men one Sunday afternoon on my way to the chapel, one among the crowd, just come out of the public-house, spotted my Bible under the arm, and with a loud laugh and sneer said, "Why, chaps, 'Owd Mo.' is carrying his Bible with him!" "Oh, yes, I am; but when attending same school thou hast come out of to-day, it was another book, something like thou has at home." "Aye, what sort was it?" So, to pacify him, I said, "Shop-book, not settled up." This wise man said no more till next morning, and then he said, "Good day, Moses; can the ex-convict be saved?" "Yes, thank God! the Lord can save to the uttermost." And we have heard the cry after serving five years in jail, in answer to a brother's prayer.

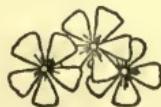
This friend being a clever gambler with cards and dominoes, his old mates was waiting for him to match him, which they did, and put one pound down. He came to the chapel on the Sunday the match should have come off on the Monday. The backers came to seek their man; but he told them right out, saying, "Last night, at the Methodist Chapel, I got converted. I come straight home and burned all the tackle I had in the house.

belonging to the devil's service; and although only just out of jail, I am a new man, and, praise God! I can sing with all my heart—

"My Jesus to know, and to feel His blood flow,
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below."

"Hullo, friend! Can the Lord save me?" This question was asked by an ex-non-commissioned officer that had been, I believe, tried before court-martial for crimes committed by him when in drink. "Yes, brother, God can save any man out of hell. Let us see what John has to say: 'And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole* world.'" So he came along to the mission and put God to the test, got converted, signed the pledge, and then asked to say a few words. "Now," he says, "a great many of you know me. For ten weeks I have taken no wages home; my poor old mother has had nothing from me besides oaths and curses. The last dirty trick that I did was to throw a burning paraffin lamp at the old woman." He wept, and we all wept together, and praised God for a Gospel that can lift a man up, no matter how low he is down. Some six months after, I was preaching four miles from the place of his conversion. Just coming out of the chapel after morning service, he came and got hold of my hand, So I said, "You have the advantage of me." "Why, don't you know me?" "No, I don't." "You ought to; it's Charlie." "Praise God, brother!"

What a change! White silk tie, good suit of cloth, black kid gloves, parson's hat, silver albert, splendid pair of boots! Would trade not flourish if men and women spent their money in food and clothing instead of the drink? The next time I saw him he told me that the manager at the works had put him up, and risen his wages three and sixpence per week. "And," said he, "now you must come to tea, for I have married one of the teachers at the Mission, left the old street, gone into a new house." So I went, had tea, read a chapter, had prayer for God's blessing upon their new home, and that this city may soon see a mighty revival of God's work. This brother has been on the platform and pulpit many a time with my friend John, who is doing a bit of the best Mission work I know. He gets a big crowd both in the open-air meeting and in the large chapel, which is in one of the lowest parts, and was almost deserted; and his co-worker, Mr. C—, they are both courageous and bold and valiant for the truth.



CHAPTER XVIII.

"MO.'S" PARISH AND SOME OF HIS PARISHIONERS.

GOING along the road one morning, after leaving an old-fashioned town, a fine-looking old clergyman of the Established Church asked me to stop the horse. So I did, thinking that an order for Bibles or Testaments was coming. But very politely he asked where I was from, how far had I come, and then, said he, "Do you know that you are in my parish?" So of course I said, "Beg your pardon; how many miles does it run?" "Oh, miles," said he, "both ways." "But, sir, you know what John Wesley said, 'The world is my parish.' I am one of his followers, so you must have made a mistake; *you* are in *my* parish. But you can stay, as there is work for both of us and all your curates." So the conversation ended with "Good morning," and I

went on my way rejoicing.

A little before this I had trouble with seven Irishmen. One poor fellow not going home when told, the police had to find him lodging.

Hell seemed to be let loose for a few weeks after this. I was discoursing from Luke's Gospel, and speaking of the contrast between the publicans of those days and of the publicans of to-day. I said,

"The old publicans was Roman tax-gatherers, and the modern publicans was English tax-makers, and we that don't drink their rubbish has to pay them." Before I knew where I was, the publican living close by came in a terrible rage, knocked me off the van, spoiled my face. I pitied the poor fellow for being such a coward. However, I prayed that God would give me grace and victory over self, which He did. Some colliers that had known me before conversion shouted out to the man, "Be thankful, friend, 'Owd Mo.' is converted, or

there would have been a publican less!"

Thank God! "He giveth more grace." "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

"Eh, police! come and lock this chap up!" This was about three o'clock on the market-day, and the words came from what the people call in that part of the country a "jetty" wine-seller. I expect his trade was slack while we stood by him, so he went in for revenge in rather a queer way. I having a large crowd of people, he came with a pony and cart, run against my steps to break them, and scattered the people right and left. I said nothing for that, thinking it was rather a joke more than anything else. But under an hour I saw him

coming again, and faster than he was before, and the people had hard task to get out of the way. Getting to my steps, he stood in the cart and threw two handfuls of his bills in my face, advertising his filthy stuff. So I ran down the steps, and put my head to the side of the cart, getting hold of the wheels and tipping the lot. The police came running, and said to the "jetty" wine-seller, "If you are not quit from this market in five minutes, I will find thee a place in the town hall!" The policeman was a member of Christ, a staunch tee-totaler. The wine-seller shouted at the wrong man, as the police had watched him for an hour. So I shouted "Glory!" and went on with my preaching and selling the books.

"Dare to be a Daniel ;
Dare to stand alone ;
Dare to have a purpose firm,
And dare to make it known."

Oh, praise God ! how easy to be a Christian now to what it used to be. God help us to endure hardness. David said to Solomon : "Be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man." To be a man nowadays we want something linked on with the grace of God ; we want backbone, to give up all, if needs be, for Christ.

We have a man before us now, the greatest gambler in the village, a drunkard, and a terror to both good and bad people. Before I came across him he had been fighting with a man at a pigeon-shooting match ; the gun went off, the other fellow was shot; our friend was tried and got off. After

this his poor horse had to stand for long hours at the door of the publican while its master was at the card table, his poor mother and wife doing their best at the business. They both told me they was afraid of him coming home, as he was so mad when in drink.

However, one evening he came to the chapel not quite sober. The power of God laid hold of him ; he shouted for mercy right in the middle of the chapel. The Lord heard his cry, and saved him. Next morning he went down to his butcher's shop, which was taken from the publican next door. My friend was invited to have twopennyworth of liquor. "No," said he, "no more ! I have got converted ; I have done with drink !" So the publican went in and wrote out

six months notice for him

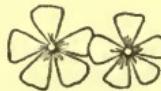
to leave the shop. There was nothing for it now only to show himself a man, which he did by keeping sober, going to the house of God. At the six months' end he had put up a shop of his own, and two good houses, one at each side, to support it.

Last time I was at this place, three years after, his wife came to seek me to the "Ark," and she told me, the day before the publicans had been to a flower show, and had got her husband to have some brandy, and he had got drunk and been fighting. I went down. He had been bitten by the man on the finger. Poor fellow ! he had a weary hand. The shop was full of customers ; he could hardly cut his meat up. I said, "Brother, I

am not going to leave this shop until you sign the pledge and ask God to forgive you." I spent all day with him, as the publicans had told him they would have the houses and the shop before very long. I shall not forget leaving at eleven o'clock at night with his and his wife's photographs and the dear old woman's blessing, and how she thanked God that just at that crisis

the Lord had led me to be there.

Brethren, we must watch and pray, or Satan will have us in the net he so wily lays to trip us up. We can soon lose what it has taken a long time to gain—that is, our character and purity and manliness. I pray that the accursed drink may soon be swept from our shores.



CHAPTER XIX.

THE GAMBLER TURNED CHAPEL-KEEPER.

“ In evil long I took delight,
 Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object met my sight
 And stopped my wild career.”

THERE are none so wild but God can tame, none so filthy but God can clean. In the case of the friend I now write about, I don't know that he was a great drunkard; but I do know he was a great gambler, and a man that could do a bit of anything in that line. One Sunday, soon after I started with the Joyful News Mission, I stood on a wagon in the open-air with Rev. H. T. Smart. After I had done speaking, a big fellow came up to me and said, “Don't you know me, friend?” “Well, I seem to have forgotten,” said I. “But I was on the Royal Oak Raceground with you often enough. But never mind those days; will you come to my house and pray with my wife and me? I must be saved, and now.” And, praise God! they are still saved, and *many* of their children walking in the paths of righteousness, and his home is furnished like a palace; for many years he has been the chapel-keeper of one of the finest chapels in Methodism, and greatly respected by all that know him. I often go to see him, or he comes to see me, when

in the town of Bolton. Thank God, we can produce to-day

some grand living miracles

from what was once the outcast of the cities. This brother, like a great many more, the reason he has been kept by the power of God lies in his earnestness for his fellows—buying tracts with his spare money, going to a poor home where he knew the father was spending his money in drink, leaving a loaf of bread where there was none, a garment for the naked, and a word of cheer for the bruised mother. “Go, and do thou likewise.”

If the world is worth saving, and the people which are now crowding our towns, we shall have to fall back and get more together in prayer. Elijah's God is our God. We want less entertainment and more prayer, less laughter and more tears ; when Christ beheld the city, He wept. It was when Samuel prayed and the Jews gathered together at Mizpah, and were willing to put away their idols, that the Lord worked with them, and the Philistines were discomfited. And if we win to-day the people who never go to any place of worship, our ministers that is set over us as generals will have to do as the old prophets did—they will have to lead their regiments, and stand at the head of the battle.

We shall never win our crown in the study,
while we leave the market-places to the
infidel and socialist.

We are engaged in a great warfare, and the battle is the Lord's, and, praise God! our weapons are not carnal. It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God." Friends, take up your cross; dare to be a Daniel, and stand alone if it need be; and let us do more in the future in trying to make the world at large more like heaven. We shall have to do all we know. I believe at this present time there are more lads in their teens gambling than ever has been known. Yes, and mothers as well, some of these women will sell or pawn their last garment to gamble. Thank God for good Sisters all over the world, that are being raised up to win these mothers and daughters to Christ. Let you and me, my friends, lay aside every weight, and, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. If we do these things, someone will soon copy from us; then we can say with the apostle Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto them also that love His appearing." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."



CHAPTER XX.

SHADOWS AND SORROWS OF THE DRINK.

RATHER a sad story this, of the time before my conversion, but it was the outcome of drink, that took place in a Yorkshire village. A companion of mine, with me and others, set off, saying, as some of you have said many a time that will read this book—“We are out to-day for a spree.” After spending pounds in the house we stayed at for hours, our friend “Tommy,” as we called him, one of the quietest and best among us, went out to the back door of the public. Seeing a few tame pigeons on the floor feeding by his feet, picked two up, put them under his coat for a lark. The landlord seeing him do this, got the horsewhip down, and started to lay it about the back of our friend, and ordered him out of the house. Of course he left without any more ado, thinking the affair had ended. But the cowardly publican, unknown to any of his mates, sent the police after him, had him locked up in Wakefield, and we waited a few days for his trial to come off. I tried hard to bail him out; but no, it was no use. The man said he would not go against him. But, however, he did; our friend got a month. He had never been locked up before, nor in the policeman’s hands, so it nearly broke his heart; he seemed never to get over it; and when

he ought to have been in his bloom, we had to carry him to his grave, leaving a wife and child behind him. Young men, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." I was the man to lead him away from his home. You older people, be careful what you do, and what you say before the young people around you; and you, young people, always choose better companions than yourselves. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." That has been the case with our young brother. I was converted before he died. I was sent for by him to pray with him; he had never prayed much for himself. I hurried off to his home as soon as I knew that he was not well; but when I got there the people said, "You are too late; he is dead!" Poor Tommy! *What killed thee has killed thousands!*

God help the readers of this story to be wise in time. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." The friend named in my penny book* that got his death-blow on the rabbit-coursing field, was mate to Tommy; and it is only through the salvation and grace of God that I am out of a drunkard's hell, and permitted to write down this sad story to warn others that is on the same path to ruin and deadly destruction. Brother, stop and think before you farther go.

"Too late, too late, will be the cry,
Jesus of Nazareth has passed by!"

* "Owd Mo," by Thomas Champness. Being the story of his life before conversion. Price One Penny. Paper covers.

With these friends that has gone, I am sorry to say that has been the case with some, as they had made no preparation for another world ; and God only knows where these poor brethren will spend eternity ! But, praise God ! brother, while you are reading this book, you can find favour with God, for there is mercy with Him.

But let me get back to the story of my better life.

One evening, after walking four miles from a temperance meeting, I was sent for to pray with a backslider. His father had died a leader and preacher. His death was hastened on, I believe, through his son's wickedness. I went to pray with him. They had brought him out of the public-house with a kind of a stroke. I got down on my knees by the bedside ; but alas, alas ! my prayers was of no earthly use, for he had breathed his last ! Poor fellow, he had died without God, or without hope of ever meeting his father in heaven !

Another friend, a very dear friend of mine, who through drink lost his place of work, got stealing some paltry thing, got some months in jail. Came out a broken-down man, was carried home out of the street some time after, died, and left many young children, I am sorry to say, to be dragged up by one of the drunkenest mothers I know ; and while she is drinking, the children in rags have to go and beg their bread. I have often helped them ; and when I saw them last I could not keep from weeping. I pray that you dear mothers who read this may be led, for your children's sake, to give up the drink. No one else can have the

influence over them as you have. God grant you will be wise in time ! As they grow up you will have less power over them than you have now. Enter Mrs. Champness's Silver Cord League, and spend no more money with the people that has what we call a drink licence. One of these gentlemen came to me one day to stop me from selling my books, saying that I was injuring his trade ; brought a magistrate to remove me, but knowing that I was not obstructing, I stood my ground.

I have been asked what I think of these Working Men's Clubs, that a great many of our excellent men support. I say wherever drink is sold, whatever kind of a club it is, or however nice name they give it, that place ought to be

under the same law as the publican.

A few months ago one of my friends was picked up drunk in the market-place ; he had to be taken home, he had no more use in his legs than a child a year old. As he was being led home he cursed and pointed to the place that had been his ruin, saying to my friend that had helped him, "That club-room there has been the means of my back-sliding. Billiards and drink did it." Our local preachers, leaders, and stewards are too often to be found in these places, that is the downfall of so many of our Sunday School scholars. This brother for years preached in the open-air ; he was converted a few months before me out of the depths of iniquity, and could always command a great crowd of people to listen to him as long as he liked to speak. He

is now brought back to God, and meets in class ; but falling so low from grace, has not the courage yet to take his stand and preach as before in the open-air. I am looking forward to have him with me again as he has been many times before.

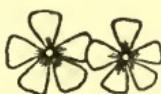
“ Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
Groaning beneath your load of sin,
His bleeding heart shall make you room,
His open side shall take you in ;
He calls you now, invites you home ;
Come, O my guilty brethren, come !”

Going visiting one day in a village where I was conducting a few days' mission, I came across a cottage with a brass plate on the door, and it said on, “ Working Man's Club.” Outside the door was three empty load barrels, thirty-six gallons, waiting to be exchanged for full ones. The same night my subject was mostly on barrels, and I said, “ In the first place, the club had got its right name ; for as long as they frequented a place where beer and gambling was,

they would have to work

when they ought to be resting.” A man of middle age, and a good man at his trade when sober, was in our congregation that evening, who had spent more time at the club-house than he spent at home, when not in bed. He came out and got converted. He is now respected ; and before this he told me that he had sold nearly all the furniture he had to raise money to go to America, and leave his wife to do the best she could with eight or nine children.

But the Lord opened his eyes and broke his heart, and God sent His word and healed him. And, praise God! I have just sent him a five shilling Bible Concordance, as he said to me, one year after his conversion, "I want to know more about the Scripture." "By their fruits ye shall know them."



CHAPTER XXI.

“BOB,” OR, “MY FRIEND ROBERT.”

“Owd Bob,” the subject of this chapter, is a collier, and was one of the worst type. Though he told me his mother had spent hours a day in prayer for his conversion, he seemed to get worse. He was a ringleader in all that was bad, his mouth was full of lies and oaths; but when all is said and done his heart was tender. He was a fearful “wisher.” Wicked men used to tremble when He got down on his knees and asked God to do His worst in blowing up the mine and taking his life and the life of others. I have been in the same wicked company when Bob has shouted out for God to let the top come in and kill the lot of us! If God had paid us our just deserts, we should have been in hell. The time came when the dear old mother saw the fruit of her prayer. I knew the bait that would fetch Bob over on the Lord’s side, and that bait will fetch more if used; a kind word goes a long way when a man starts to think.

So one day he came and told me all his trouble, after the meeting the night before, how he was tired of the way he was living in adultery, for he found the ways of transgressors are hard. “And, mon,” said he, “if I don’t stop, I shall soon be in hell.”

"But, my friend, the Lord never turned one away. 'Knock, and it shall be opened; seek, and ye shall find; ask, and ye shall receive.'"

"Aye, 'Mo.;' but tha knows how I have lived, and how I am living now. But I dare not leave this place; I was afraid of going to sleep last night. Oh, how the pains of hell gat hold upon me!"

"Yes, they gat hold upon David. 'Then,' he said, 'I called upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.' 'Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" Then went up the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and, praise God! "the dungeon flamed with light,"

and he was set free.

Everyone soon knew that our friend had got converted. The furniture-cart was soon on the spot; he got married to the woman he had lived with for years. Last time I had tea with him he was living in a large house, well furnished and paid for, had a nice lot of poultry, and a few pigs in the sty, and was respected by those that once despised him.

And then some people say that this Gospel is only imagination! I say if it will make a thief honest, and a drunkard sober, and a bad father and mother into good ones, give us more imagination! Bob cannot read much; but says he, "I can read my title clear. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see; and, praise God! instead of my name being in the publican's book, it is in the Book of Life."

One way to have a happy home, as I have heard my friend Bob say (or "Robert," as the people now call him), is to take your wages home instead of taking them to the publican's. You don't hear of many publicans being thankful of their customers signing the pledge. But the landlord where Bob used to spend his money said to him one day, "I hope you will keep firm, and drink no more." Bob was all right when sober and standing treat for all round,

but when in drink very troublesome.

People generally are when the devil is in. My friends, take my advice—one that has tried both sides, but now, praise God! knows which is best by far.

Robert has not grown into the life he is now living without being helped and nursed by a dear friend at this place, who has a kind word for everyone, and works hard among these people—takes them to his home, charms them with his talent for music. We can't all play music, but we can all speak a kind word, and cheer those that has been brought to God through Christ out of great depths of iniquity and sin. Our friend can say now with the psalmist, "I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify Thy name for evermore: for great is Thy mercy toward me, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."

"Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free ;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee."

CHAPTER XXII.

MOSES ON PRACTICAL RELIGION.

AFTER preaching one day for nearly three hours in the open-air, a man came to me and said, "Well, friend, I have been here since the beginning of the meeting; but a' don't believe all thou has said, because I don't believe the Bible." "Thou don't believe? Then what art thou, as thou don't believe the Bible?" He said, "I am a man." "But," I said, "this old Book calls thee a fool!" "Oh," said he, "I am an infidel." "Get off, man; I never saw one that wanted to die. I can buy them all at fourpence a stone, and give some over-weight in." "Hold on," said he. "What's call practical religion?" So I had happened to do a little of it the day before, and was able to tell him, as I came out of one of the eating-houses in the market, I saw seven little lads and girls almost naked, so they asked me "if I had brought any bread out with me?" "No, I have not. Are you hungry?" "Yes, sir," came from them all. So I took them inside. "Now, my girl, what will you take?" "Currant cake, sir, if you please." So they all followed suit, as, poor things, you could see they got more kicks than currants at home, and

more cuffs than hot coffee.

"Oh," said he, "that's practical." So I said, "Now, look here, I am going to make thee to believe in the Bible. And turning to the second book of Kings, chapter four, I said, "Here we have a woman with two lads, husband and father was dead, she could not pay her way; afraid that the creditors would take her lands from her, she cried unto the man of God, and Elisha said, 'What shall I do for thee?'" "Aye, that's very good and practical; but all the Christians are not alike." "No," I said; "and all sheep are not alike; neither are men and women, and never will be in that part on the top of their shoulders; and *that is thy weak spot!* But, brother, thee go home, read the old Book, and take Christ for a pattern. Follow out His teaching; and when I see thee again, if it is to be, thou wilt be a better man." So he went home, I pray a wiser man after our conversation.

There is a great many people reading you and me, my friends. Let us walk perfect before God, and let it be said of us, as the ungodly damsels said of Paul and Silas, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." God grant it!

One evening I was closing my van at eleven o'clock. This was in the town of G—. I had sent my mate home a few hours before with a bad cough. A man came up, looking all round the van. "Don't close," said he. "What do you want?" "Oh, I want to know what Joyful news is." So I said, "Joyful news was joyful news, glad tidings, light for those that are in darkness."

Oh, that definition would not do; so he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this man is not fit for the work he is doing." So I opened out again, and said, "Now, then, if you can do it better than I can do it, get on this van." So he did.

"Now, then, what have I to do up here?" So I said, "Mend my work; sell those people books." So he opened out sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, started reading, stopped, then talked about Christ being everything but good. So of course I could not stand that, so

getting hold of his coat collar

I helped him down, and said, "Come, man, let me have another turn." One gentleman gave five shillings for the Mission, saying the man tried to upset all that come into the town. Of course he never give me any more trouble.



CHAPTER XXIII.

SOUTH WALES, AND A RETROSPECT.

WE must thank God for the way He has led us. From the old "van" we have had two big "chickens" and a small one.* But like everything else, there is competition; eight years since there was not so many vans as there is now. But I say, as long as they build a brewer's waggon, we ought to have a Bible waggon. A small van can go where the big ones can't get. And the one we had came in answer to prayer, and its first journey was on Home Mission Deputation Work, as I went round with Rev. Josiah Mee. (This van is now in different hands.) One of our good brethren, Brother R. Hewitt, and friend Williams brought it all the way to South Wales to meet us down there, and we had good times together, Mr. Beagley steering it about the valleys. And all these years God has given us travelling mercy, and brought us off without any great accident save a broken finger.

God blessed us; but in Wales, like England, are the two great curses, drink and gambling. One home I went in I found little furniture, father in jail, wife and children wanting bread. And what

did you do in that case? You would be sorry for them? I was. It was Sunday afternoon. I was so sorry, that I went off and fetched them a large *loaf of bread* and something with it till the next day; then I went to prison to see the father, poor, broken-hearted fellow.

In Brecon prison I found the following in a prisoner's diary:

A VOICE FROM BRECON JAIL.

"Buy the truth, and sell it not."

"I once possessed the truth, which I should ne'er have sold ;
But in a dark and evil hour I bartered it for gold.

What bought I with the gold ? I need not pause to think ;
Though now it fills my mind with pain—I bought the cursed drink.

What did the drink for me ? It marred my peaceful life ;
It parted me from children dear, and from my loving wife.

It caused the wife to droop, to fall into her grave ;
And I not near to hear her say that she poor me forgave.

It sent me from my home, in sinful ways to stray,
To want and starve and madly rove, by night as well as day.

It led me into crime, and what I shame to tell,
It placed me fast within a jail, to fill a felon's cell.

And now I sit to-day within the cell, and think
Of all the happy days I had before I knew the drink."

We had more than one good time in South Wales. At Newport they bought good books, helped us in our open-air meetings, found us food and shelter, and did all they could. But I could name a few places I found down there where they had none of these qualities. But they may prove more generous to those that follow in our footsteps.

I believe the Joyful News "Ark" was the means of providing a Mission van for the South Wales District. Before I left the kind-hearted chairman, the late Rev. Neville Andrews, and Rev. Josiah Mee, asked me at the quarterly meeting how it would act; and I told them if they got a Welshman and an Englishman, and plenty of Welsh books, it would just be the right thing.

Passing through the Rhondda Valley, of course we had to have opposition from the beer barrel, or those that deal with them. But, no cross, no crown;

God is above the devil.

One poor fellow had taken out a grocer's licence, so I planted the "Ark" down about fifteen yards from his door. However, he came and brought a magistrate to "shift me," as he said, "I was a great hindrance to his trade." Of course I told him if his trade was a good one, whatever I did, do what we would, we could not injure it. But I said, if it is a bad trade it wants stopping, and I shall not remove till Monday morning, and do all I can to stop it. So they said I should have to take the responsibility; it might be prison. So I took it in good part, and also that Saturday evening took nearly twelve pounds for good books. Then I could say with St. Paul, "I am now ready to be offered; the time of my departure is at hand." Glory be to God! So I left Wales, after making many friends and only a few enemies, and those was only the poor publicans, who know not what they do.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHY HE LEFT THE CARAVAN.

WELL, my friends, you have already read how the Lord has blessed me in my van work, and a great many friends have said, "Moses, how was it you left the van?" So, as well as I can put it before you, you shall read for yourselves. In the first place, it was a great trouble to me, as anyone who knew me before my conversion knew that whatever I did I put my whole soul into it, and so in God's service I must either do the same or die in the attempt. I would rather do as the people have said about the country, "'Owd Mo.' will kill himself before the time." But work will kill no one that is well and strong; it is the want of it that kills a great many people. But I want to impress upon the young people that will read this to give the first and best part of their young lives to God. You see, for a good many years I was sowing my wild oats, and the old Book says: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Well, that is the reason I had to leave the work I so dearly loved, after talking and selling books eight hours on the market-places on the Saturdays, in all kinds of weather, and about six services on the Sunday. Going on

like this week after week for nearly eight years, and nearly every day on some village green, it found out the weak places in my body that had been so much abused in the service of sin and the evil one. Finding myself no longer able to do the work, I wept in my thoughtful moments to think how little I had done for God. Had the first part of my life been spent for God, I should have been with the van to-day. But however well I may look, I know I do not feel so well, though religion has done a lot for my improvement, as the old lady said while speaking in my own town in the market-place; the old woman cried out, "Some on yoas ses thar's nought in religion. Look at 'Owd Mo.'; he's twenty year younger to-day than ever he were;" and my readers will say "Amen" to that when they see the two photographs, "Before and after conversion."

But after much prayer and sorrow of heart, I had to say to Mr. Champness that I must give up the van work, as I could no longer stand it, and that I would give place to some of the younger brethren. Well, some of my friends said, "Leave," and Satan said, "Leave, and try something else." Well, for hours I wrestled with God in tears that He would show me what would be best for me to do. As God had blessed me so much, I was afraid to turn to any other kind of work. But when I could not do the van work I was depressed, and afraid I might be like a broken oar in the boat; and for days all seemed dark, and I said to missis and family, "We will clear out." But kind words from Mr. and Mrs. Champness, and a letter from my

dear friend Rev. Josiah Mee, gave me fresh hope, and I went out to Mission work.

But for months I could not reconcile myself with having to leave poor old Janet and the “Ark” I loved so well. But I believe now I was truly called to give up the van, that my life might be spared a little longer to my family of dear children, which

I love with all my heart.

Reader, there has been a change; it was the publican's family that I used to love. Well, praise God! I started Mission services in the village chapels as well as in some of our large towns and cities, and God has blessed my labours. Not being a good or quick writer, answering letters that have been sent with invitations for services has taken a great amount of my time (and some of the dear people have forgot to put in a stamp for reply, and that takes money as well). This blessed Gospel I have preached to both rich and poor, and God has owned and blessed the word. I have seen the magistrates' son at the penitent-form kneeling next to the factory lad, and next to the man that had spent his money in riotous living. Yes, God has blessed me in my work since I had to leave the van. I have been cheered and helped by the kindness of the people, and they have always welcomed me, both rich and poor.

Friends have said to me, “I expect you find some of the places cold and hard, and almost dead, and some neither hot or cold.” Well, I have had to confess, and say, “Yes.” And some places the

man in the next pew has never spoken to his next neighbour for a year or two—that makes it hard as well. But the worst part about it, you vex these people and send them home in a rage if you say they are not Christians. But let us see what John in his epistle has to say about them: “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandment.” Reader, let you and the writer never be found among this class of people, that cannot give their next-door neighbour a hearty grip of the hand, and say out of a full heart, “Is it well with thy soul?”

The old Methodist preachers used to pray for the burden of souls. The Master wept as He came and saw the sins of the old city. We want more tears and less laughter; more family prayer; more home religion; more solid reading and less “penny dreadfuls.” I have just received a letter from an old friend about a young man that was converted at one of my meetings ten months since, only twenty-three years of age, been in the policeman’s hands several times. Down the coal-pit where he works they call him “Young Mo.” Praise God! he is not afraid to tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save; he only regrets he did not give his heart to God sooner. A young football player, while I was conducting a mission not long ago came and got hold of my hand. “Do you not know me sir?” “No, I don’t remember you.” “But you ought

to; the Lord saved me eighteen months ago, and I have not kicked a ball since." "Thank God, brother! Get a lot more in the same mind as yourself. Preach Christ to your old mates. Live to make this part you live in more like heaven. Thousands are dying without God and hope."

A few weeks ago one young man came into the house where I was staying, bringing with him a request for prayer that God would give him grace to keep from the football field. This young man had got careless, and neglected his Bible, and the class had nearly gone out of his thoughts. When his father and mother said anything to him about going to these sports among those that was blaspheming God's name, he would point to a former minister and local preachers and class-leaders in the same circuit, and say, "There must be no harm in going, or these people would not go." But, thank God! this young man has seen the error of his ways, and is spending his time better. He found out that spending his time in the counsel of the ungodly did not stimulate him for God's service on the Sunday. But his delight now is in the law of the Lord, not in being mixed up with gamblers.

Jesus said, "To-day I must abide at thy house."

Let us be at home, friends,

when He comes, for He will bring a blessing with Him.



CHAPTER XXV.

THE SECRET OF IT ALL.

A GENTLEMAN said to me one day, "Well, Moses, I should like to know how it is you get hold of the people? You seem to get good congregations wherever you go, and you talk straight." So in the first place I told him that every word that came out of my mouth came from God, and again that I believed the success of my missions was not in the crowds coming to the chapel, but it was in breaking of bread from house to house. I like going from door to door in my visiting, and that is where the secret lies; the man that will talk with the people in their homes will have the chance to speak to them from the pulpit. I have proved this by experience.

In one of my missions I went one day into twenty homes where there was little food, and children naked; a great many of the fathers had to leave the village and go elsewhere to seek work, as the collieries were flooded and ironworks stopped. I could not get down on my knees and pray for these dear children. But without bag or basket I went off to the grocer with a few shillings of my own, spent up, distributed it as well as was possible as far as it would go, and then prayed in the homes—

pictures and furniture in many of them all gone. I came to the home where I was staying. Tea I wanted none; but the dear people with whom I stayed urged it on me. Then I told them what I had found. They was just cleaning down, and having a large family of their own, I saw some old clothes that had just left their wardrobes; so I told dear Mrs. H—— that I could find a place for them as the dear lads and girls was near naked, and day after day I set off on my mission with a parcel of clothes under one arm and food under the other. I am afraid before my Mission was over I took not only old clothes, but some nearly new. Of course the lads and girls thought no worse of them! The last night of my Mission in that place will not be forgotten. In a field close by the Mission-room Mr. H—— and family gave over two hundred of these dear lambs a good tea, and all the parents that came. As I was leaving that night both old and young shouted out many times,

**“Oh, Mister ‘Owd Mo.,’ when will you
come again ?”**

If there had been no Joyful News Mission, these dear young children would perhaps never have had this treat. I wish the wealthy people could see how they might help our Mission on by taking a few “Joyful News” every week, and by sending their orders to the Book Depôt.

Is it not true that some preachers are missing great blessings by spending all their time in the study or in the well-to-do houses? The Master

went about doing good amongst the sick and the dying in the homes of the rich and the poor. That was the mission of Jesus, and ought to be the mission of you and me if we call ourselves Christians.

I love open-air work as well as ever I did in my life, but cannot do as much of it now as I have done. At a meeting one evening a man came to me after I had done speaking. "Now," said he "is Jim a-going to speak to-night in the Methodist chapel? Because, if he is, I am going to come." So I inquired who "Jim" was, from the man, who had a bull-dog in a chain. "Oh, Jim is one that used to work on the same bench as me, and when he got converted he give up gambling and signed the pledge, and we tried by putting rum in his tea at the works to make him break his pledge, but he could smell it, and pitched the tea away." So of course I told him that men that was led by their dogs had not half their courage, or they never would be such cowards as to persuade a man to take again the stuff that had blighted and cursed his home. "Well," said he "Jim's a-grand chap now, and he is genuine." Praise God for such samples of Christianity! Reader, His grace that found you out can keep you to the end.

A direct answer to prayer.

After visiting a great many houses one day, I had to hurry on as it was getting near meeting time. Going along a side street, I was impressed to call in about the middle house in the row of houses. I

knocked at the door three times, then got admitted. Not much fire, all nice and clean round the house ; but on the couch, father had been lying there for weeks, burned in the colliery. I was talking to a clean little girl about fourteen, and to the poor man that was suffering, when I heard someone coming downstairs. Turning round, I saw the mother ; neither of us could speak. Putting what money I had on the table, I was going out. I could see the woman had been talking to God about their trouble ; but she laid hold of me, and we wept together, and she praised God for answered prayer. I told the lady I was staying with, and she sent one of the servants down and loaded them with provisions and money, and she said, "The woman is one of my members, and she paid her pence last week, and never mentioned her poverty." What a friend we have in Jesus ! I told the story at a meeting the day after, at a meeting where Mr. Champness was, at the Kidderminster Chapel, when the Mayor gave me ten shillings for the poor woman. What has the sceptic to say to that ?

When I cannot visit in my Mission work, I shall say, "*Lord, take me to heaven out of the way of all the sorrowful and broken-hearted, and hide from me the tears of the hungry children and the fatherless bairns!*" "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and thou shalt dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

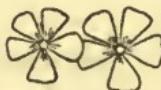
Yes, God is blessing our Mission work. Never shall I forget the groans and tears and afterwards the rejoicing a short time since of a father and

mother. How they had prayed for years for two prodigal sons! I believe there are seven sons and daughters, and five of them was on the Lord's side. These two big sons came to my Mission. God laid hold of them. The power of God was manifest amongst us; they both came rushing out to the front, dropped down on their knees, and for a whole hour they poured out their hearts to God in agony of soul and tears. The Lord sent them home new men. Thank God, He makes

"all things new!"

MOSES WELSBY ("Owd Mo.")

THE END.



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